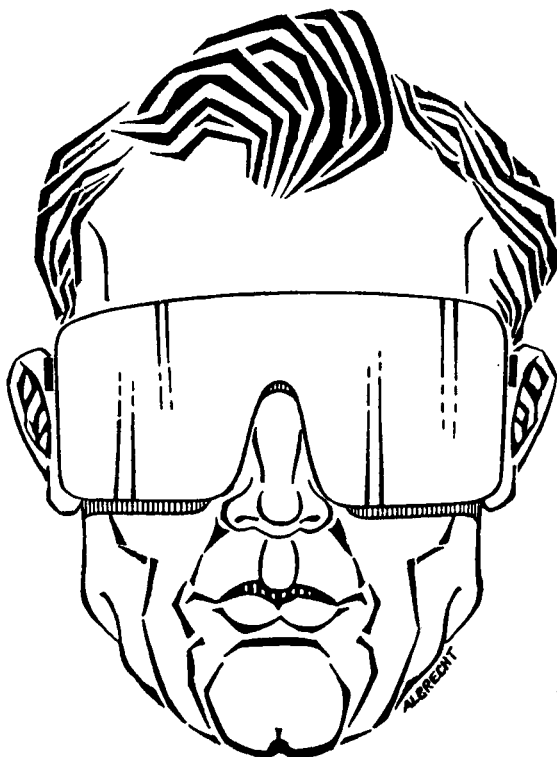


THE BLINDFOLD BOOK



**Instructions and Routines
for
Richard Osterlind's
APEX STAINLESS STEEL BLINDFOLD**

**With Additional Material by
☆ Jeff Busby ☆ Paul Fox ☆ Faucett Ross ☆**

THE BLINDFOLD BOOK
for

RICHARD OSTERLIND'S



**STAINLESS STEEL
APEX BLINDFOLD**

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Section I

THE APEX STAINLESS STEEL BLINDFOLD

What It Is & How to Use It

Richard Osterlind and Jeff Busby

Laymen are astounded when you perform any sort of magic or mentalism while blindfolded. Experienced performers know how much more effective mentalism, a *Poker Deal* or other gambling routine, psychic tests, the *Card Stab*, a *Stop Trick*, and even straight magic can be if you perform without the apparent use of sight. You can transform a simple effect into an applause-getting miracle through the addition of a blindfold.

Over the past two centuries many different trick blindfolds and blindfold methods have been marketed and explained in print. A survey of the pertinent literature will give you hundreds of methods to choose from. Only a very few are appropriate for the professional performer. The greater bulk of them are neither practical or convincing. Perhaps this is the reason that any sort of blindfold is rarely used.

Richard Osterlind's *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is meant to be an improvement over existing methods, but it is far more than that — it is a new approach that offers several unique advantages over anything previously marketed or published. Prime evidence for this statement is the fact that Richard uses the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* continually in his professional performances. Jeff Busby Magic, Inc. takes great pride in once again releasing a perfected professional method and product we hope will become part of your performing repertoire.

The magician or mentalist looking for the perfect method need look no further! *The Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* allows rigid examination by the spectators. They will find nothing that will expose the subtle secret. No sliding panels, holes, gaps at the nose — nothing used in any other method. When the spectator tries the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* on himself, he will see nothing, because his vision is completely obscured by a wall of thick stainless steel.

Yet, by knowing the diabolical secret you instantly and effortlessly have full straight-ahead vision. And while you have full vision, the spectators can examine your face from inches away and see nothing!

This is not a flimsy thin cover that looks as if it has been cut from a tin can. The *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is a precision machined piece of thick, solid, gleaming stainless steel made by skilled craftsmen to look right and to work right all of the time.

There are none of the time-wasting preparations necessary with so many other blindfolds. No fumbling with tying straps, preparing dough, messy adhesive tape, scissors, and the like. The spectator examines it and you put it on. You're ready for your effect immediately!

We have gone to a great deal of trouble and expense to make the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* the best ever offered to the magical fraternity. I'm sure that once you begin to use it, you'll have the same enthusiasm for it that we do.

However, even if you prefer for some reason not to use Richard's ingenious creation in favor of some other method, you will find this book full of new effects and valuable information that you may use in improving your work with the blindfold.

HISTORY

The *Blindfold Act* (or *Sightless Vision*, *Seeing with the Fingertips*, *X-Ray Eyes*, or whatever you want to call it) has been an integral part of magic and mentalism since 1816 when British psychic Margaret M'Avoy pretended to see colors and words with her fingertips while blindfolded. Most blindfold methods published or marketed employ either the downward peek, or allow the performer to have straight-ahead vision through the use of an opening or some sort of alternately opaque/transparent principle. Some versions use both methods.

The downward peek has been widely explored (and exposed) in print. You'll find a clear description of it in Gilles-Edme Guyot's 1740 French classic *NOUVELLES RECREATIONS PHYSIQUES ET MATHEMATIQUES* in the form of the *Blindfold Card Stab* (later made famous by the legendary Max Malini). And, you'll find other blindfold routines using the same method described by John Henry Anderson in 1844 and a blindfold gambling routine described by Robert-Houdin in 1858.

Many performers have made themselves legends through their acts with the blindfold. Kuda Bux, Dr. Harlan Tarbell, John Booth, and Maurice Fogel come to mind immediately. Ronnie Gann has developed his routine to where it is the highpoint of his act, and is primarily responsible for his vast success on the cruise ships and in top nightclubs. Glenn Falkenstein uses one in his top-rate message reading routine. Max Maven uses the blindfold in his act in a memorable way that fools even other mentalists. There are, of course, many other workers who do fine routines with the blindfold, and a complete list of both present and past magicians and mentalists would be quite extensive.

As noted above, the downward peek method has been widely explored in print. Many of the routines by Tarbell, Corinda, Bill Larsen Sr., and others covered in the *Recommended Reading* section of this book are outstanding examples. These methods are ideal for any act where the information to be gained is below the eye level of the performer so that he does not have to tip his head back to be able to see.

Some routines requiring straight-ahead vision are the *Blindfold Drive* (first introduced in 1885 by mentalist Washington Irving Bishop — a tragic figure in magic history — though the *Blindfold Walk* was done as early as 1821 by English stonemason Dennis Hendrick and Joe Dunninger was the first to use a car in 1917), Ted Annemann's *Mystery of the Blackboard* from *Jinx* magazine, and Jeff Busby's routine for *Telepato* (later in this book). In truth the latter method of secret vision has far more applications than the former, which can be very limited.

Many of the trick blindfolds in the literature and on the market over the years use ingenious methods to render the opaque blindfold transparent so that you can actually see through one or more layers of the cloth, which is usually black in color. French magician Alexis Didier was apparently the first to use a faked blindfold as early as 1847.

Many of the "hood" or "bandage" types of faked blindfolds generally use this type of method. This can be convincing, however most of these will not stand up to more than a cursory inspection. In practice, I have found that audience members are suspicious of a cloth blindfold, being well aware of the transparency of cloth. Yet, methods still continue to be published — there are books full of them, such as Will Dexter's *SEALED VISION* and Burling Hull's *LAST WORD BLINDFOLD METHODS* which contained a full dozen of them.

In using some of the cloth straight-ahead vision faked blindfolds there is another drawback: if you work in a nightclub with rather bad light, you may find the blindfold to be more legitimate than you might like!

Finally, we come to a blindfold often used by modern day working mentalists: the so-called *Steel Blindfold* — the *Man in the Iron Mask* blindfold invented by Malcolm Davison and first explained in Harry Stanley's *Gen* in 1958. You'll find this on the market under the name of *Steel Blindfold*, *Solid Steel Blindfold*, *Mentalist's Steel Mask*, and so forth.

Obviously you cannot see through steel, so logically there must be an opening somewhere to give you vision. This opening is usually around the nose cut-out, which you must have on a metal blindfold to keep your nose from being squashed flat! This opening is cut square so you are able to see out the sides of your nose, since the bridge of your nose is round. These blindfolds are usually painted black so that the spaces will blend in with the blindfold to help conceal the secret. Unfortunately, a spectator will discover the secret if he is allowed to put the blindfold on, and careful visual examination from a few feet away might reveal the open triangles at the cutout.

It is with this last type of blindfold that Richard decided to concern himself when designing his own blindfold. He decided that when a layman thinks of "steel" he or she pictures a shiny object. And, in order to make the "steel shield" concept more formidable looking, he also decided that it should be rather large. In addition, he wanted a method that would allow good straight-ahead vision without any tilting of the head — even the standard *Steel Blindfold* requires some tilting in order to see something at eye level.

The *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* meets all of these requirements and also has the advantage that the spectator can try on the blindfold himself without discovering anything. In addition, there seems to be no space at all around the nose opening so that the performer can have the spectators staring right at the blindfold from just a few inches away and still not have to worry about them seeing anything. The design of the blindfold allows you to have vision when you want it and it is legitimate when you don't have to see!

BACKGROUND

In my other books published by Jeff Busby, I have always gone to pains to explain why and how I have come to develop the effects and methods that I use. This stems from a frustration borne from years of purchasing magic books and props which, while they contain wonderful methods, make me wonder why more magical authors don't consider the effect first!

I don't want to appear cynical. I feel that there are a great many truly marvellous effects being invented today. However, I also feel that if you understand fully why an originator has come to invent a particular effect, you will better understand how to perform it to attain the maximum impact possible.

Personally, I have always favored a blindfold which allows the performer straight-ahead vision. In addition, I always delight in finding methods of working where the apparatus involved is either ungimmicked, or gimmicked in such a way as to make detection virtually impossible. If you're familiar with some of my other effects, you know that many of the routines I've released depend upon apparatus that is in essence ungimmicked and examinable, but specially made to achieve the effect I want. The *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is such an item.

As I noted above, I always think of the effect I want, and then try to come up with a solution that will achieve that effect in the most impossible way.

Here's how the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* came into being. By reading the following, you'll more fully understand the unique principle behind the method of the blindfold.

In 1983, Jeff Busby marketed in a very limited edition a color and symbol divination effect called *Telepato*. (The version marketed by Jeff included the props made by the late Theo Timmerman of Holland. He explains how you can easily make them up later in this book.) Jeff's routine used the props in an unique way which involved, in part, a new combination of principles rarely used even by mentalists — pencil reading and a faked blindfold. I ordered the effect, along with a blindfold that Jeff mentioned would work in the routine — one of the many other dealer's versions of the original *Man in the Iron Mask* blindfold.

While I loved Jeff's routine — I still use it professionally — I was disappointed with the blindfold I received. It wasn't well made, and to me the method is a bit obvious. If you have any of the marketed versions of the Davison idea, or have read about it, you may be aware that the area that covers the bridge of the nose is squared off, allowing you full vision through the open angles right at the bridge of the nose. As John Booth — one of the earliest proponents of the *X-Ray Eyes* act — has stated: "Increasingly sophisticated audiences tend to recognize the nose-window principle thus forcing mentalists to invent ever more convincing ways to blindfold themselves . . .". It has been exposed so many times in the popular press that your audience will no doubt contain spectators who are aware of this method. I don't want any of my spectators to know how anything I do works!

In conversations with Jeff, we both agreed that there had to be a better solution. For one thing, the blindfolds that were on the open market were shoddy — they looked like they had been cut from a tin can and spray painted black! Not one had a formidable appearance, and not one was made from stainless steel, as originally suggested by Malcolm Davison — it's a hard metal to work with. So, I toyed first with having my own version of the Davison blindfold made from thick looking stainless steel. But, there was still the problem of those open cutouts, which I definitely wanted to eliminate.

I kept thinking about it. Coming up with no solution, I consciously forgot about it, but it must have been lurking in my subconscious, because my "Aha!" eventually appeared!

One day I walked into the bathroom to check if my hair and face were in order before leaving home. As I pondered I happened to notice how tightly my glasses (Kreskin style . . . of course!) fit the bridge of my nose. At the same time, I realized that if I squinted with either of my eyes, I could see under the frame of my glasses at the bridge of my nose, even though they still looked a tight fit in the mirror.

This clicked with the idea of the metal blindfold that was still in my subconscious. I asked myself: "Would it be possible to design a metal blindfold that could use this idea?"

I began experimenting with cut up pieces of cardboard. When I finally reached a workable design for the nose opening, an idea occurred to me that would make the blindfold unworkable to anyone else unless the secret was known.

Cardboard wouldn't work for the new theory, so I immediately invested in an aluminum baking pan which I cut up and started using in ways that the manufacturer never dreamed of. I made two prototypes and sent one to Jeff who was enthusiastic about the new idea. He tested it, and fooled some well-posted mentalists with it. I used mine in my shows up until the time we produced the commercial model from stainless steel, which I'm really pleased with.

The size of my *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is larger than any of the versions of the Davison idea on the market, since I knew ahead of time that the final product would have to be made of stainless steel — I wanted it to look super impressive.

The first time I put on my prototype I went to my bathroom mirror — the same one as before — and couldn't believe I saw what I shouldn't be seeing: I saw myself completely and totally blindfolded. And, I couldn't believe just how well I was able to see myself being unable to see!

And, the idea that I had worked perfectly from the beginning — it is so diabolical that I chuckle to myself whenever I use it.

The secret is that I placed the slots for the elastic strap in such a position as to control the leverage of the blindfold itself — you'll note that the slots are near the upper edge of the blindfold. If a spectator puts it on in the normal way, with the elastic falling where it will behind the ears, the blindfold bears down on the bridge of the nose and holds it tightly against the flesh, making it impossible to see. If, however, the blindfold is placed on the head with the elastic up slightly higher than normal on the back of the head, subtle eyebrow and forehead movement will cause the blindfold to move upwards.

The amount that the blindfold moves can be easily controlled by eye movements so slight that they are impossible to see. And, you will be amazed when you discover how much you can see with only a pinpoint opening. You can actually have a person examining you inches away and they will not see the opening! To top this off, you can lower the blindfold back to its legitimate condition with a miniscule movement of your eyes!

BASIC HANDLING

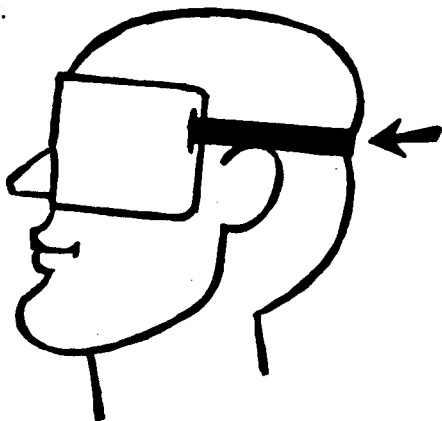
Because the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is a piece of utility apparatus which each performer will use in his/her own personal way, it would be pointless to write these instructions in the standard magical "Effect-Method" style. Instead, we'll teach you the proper way of handling the blindfold, and then give you several applications, ideas, and references for further routines and study.

When you examine the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*, you'll see that there is nothing gimmicked about it in any way. There are no holes, sliding panels, or cutouts.

Before we delve into the method of "setting" the blindfold, let's experiment with it in the normal way so that you'll fully understand the principle.

Place the blindfold on as you normally would, as shown in Figure One. The strap on the blindfold is adjustable and you should adjust it to fit rather firmly but not tightly on your head. The metal should seat very tightly around the bridge of the nose effectively cutting off all vision. If it does not, you may have to adjust it: the stainless steel is somewhat flexible, so you will be able to make small adjustments in shape for your own facial structure, if necessary.

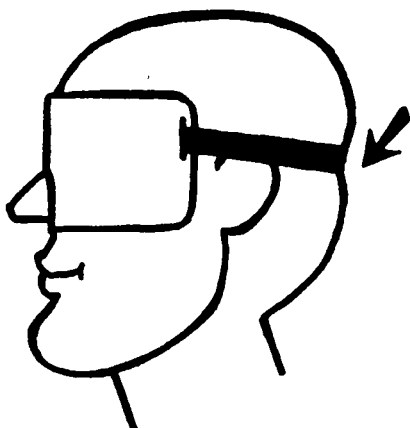
FIGURE
ONE



With the blindfold on in this position, you may possibly be able to move it upwards somewhat by doing a lot of squinting, but that would be a very unnatural movement.

If you really want to lock the blindfold in place, reach behind your head and slide the elastic strap downwards, so that it is from 1 to 1 ½ inches below the normal position, as shown in Figure Two. Note how, in this position, the blindfold pulls down on the bridge of the nose, making it almost impossible to move it upwards with eye movement.

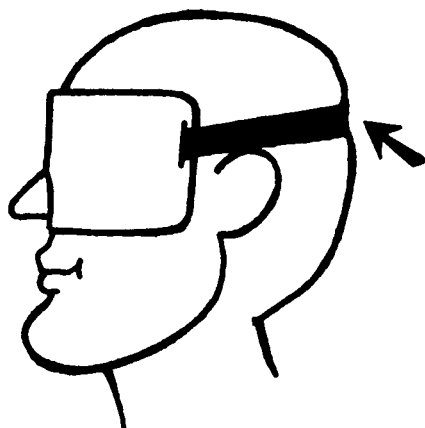
FIGURE
TWO



It's important that you understand both the "normal" and "locked" positions for the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* so that you can place the blindfold on any spectator and they will not be able to see.

Now, here is the proper way to put the blindfold on to allow you to see: Start to put the blindfold on, but place the strap behind your head first, and then bring the blindfold down to your eyes — the exact reverse of what you would normally do. The strap will ride higher on the back of your head, as shown in Figure Three.

FIGURE
THREE



You will find that with the slightest of eye movements you will be able to cause the blindfold to ride upwards, giving you straight ahead vision. In reality, the blindfold should hardly move at all.

The real secret of making this convincing is to **hardly move the blindfold** but the barest fraction of an inch. The opening you will need to get to obtain full vision is so

small that a spectator who is staring at the blindfold from just inches away will not see any opening.

When I get the opening I don't think of actually raising the blindfold up, but rather I simply squint slightly until I see a ray of light. Then . . . just a bit more, and I have clear vision. You can control with which eye you see. (Actually you can see with both eyes at once if you wish, but I don't recommend it — it requires raising the blindfold up too high.) With a bit of experimentation you will quickly decide which eye you prefer. You will also find that when you put the blindfold on, you can favor one eye or the other by pressing the blindfold more tightly against one side of the nose or the other. This motion is completely invisible to the spectators. Your vision will not, of course, be straight ahead, but rather angled off a bit to the right or left. This actually helps the illusion: It appears that you are not even looking at the object you are describing!

Remember: The key to deceptiveness is the smallness of the opening through which you see. Don't ruin it by raising the whole blindfold up so far that the method is obvious!

Experienced performers will know this without my saying it. What makes good mentalism so strong — and dangerous — is the simplicity of method. With proper showmanship, practice, and (as Dai Vernon would say) "head sense", you can perform miracles. But . . . make a clumsy mistake, and not only does the effect become laughable, but your whole prestige as a performer vanishes . . . I repeat vanishes.

When a magician makes a mistake, he has a chance of coming back. When a mentalist messes up, he might as well leave the stage.

I am not referring here to missing on the effect but rather exposing the method. In the past, I have had times when I was sure that someone in the audience was on to the method I was using. When this happened I immediately imposed more test conditions making the outcome impossible. Then I deliberately failed. It's not good to fail, but I would rather do that than expose. The very few times this has happened, the audience has actually been on my side — it helped build my prestige later in the show when the next "impossible" routine worked.

The whole point is this: **Protect the secret!**

SPECTATOR EXAMINATION

I've just detailed how the blindfold can be put on so as to make vision impossible. Obviously the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* can be placed on a spectator using these moves to "prove" that the blindfold is legitimate. I don't normally go to this extent, as it isn't necessary under normal working conditions. My normal way of handling it is this:

I call upon a spectator and show him the blindfold while talking about the fact that it is made of thick stainless steel and is impossible to see through. (Most people believe that the only way a blindfold can be tricked is if it is gimmicked in some way to allow you to see through it — which is, in fact, how so many of the cloth blindfolds work! Laymen never seem to suspect that you might see around it.)

I hand the spectator the blindfold and ask them to look it over. Most of the time they'll hold it up to the light or place it near their eyes, but almost never will they put it on. If you want to be almost 100% sure of this, call on a woman with a nice hairdo to be your volunteer in inspecting the blindfold. She certainly won't ruin a \$40.00 permanent for the sake of inspecting it!

Of course, if someone wants to put it on, simply "help them" with it; in the process getting the strap into the proper position to make it impossible to see.

There is nothing lost by not having the spectator try on the blindfold. Since you place it in their hands to examine and since a moment later you put it on and have them

scrutinize it, there seems to be no way that it can be gimmicked. As I pointed out before, almost all of the spectators will want to know if the blindfold is transparent in some way. Once they are convinced that it is not they will feel that there is nothing else to look for in it and will be convinced that it is legitimate.

A very subtle way of having the spectator examine the blindfold is this: Use it on an assistant in an effect where you don't want him to see! "Lock" the blindfold on a spectator and then have him select a word in a book for a *Book Test*, select a card, etc. In this case, as the purpose of the blindfold is to blindfold him and not you, there is absolutely no reason for suspicion. Later, when you use the same blindfold on yourself, it has already been examined in the best possible way!

ADDITIONAL METHODS OF SEALING THE EYES

Many of the books and magazine articles written about the *X-Ray Eye Act* have covered additional safeguards when putting on a blindfold to "prove" that you cannot see, such as tape, coins, dough, additional bandages and the like. I have studied many of these methods and would like to offer some of my thoughts on the subject.

Whether you should use additional methods of sealing the eyes depends entirely on the particular routine you are doing.

You should first consider that there are two ways to use any type of blindfold. One is when the blindfold is incidental to the effect; the effect would be impossible looking even without the blindfold. A good example is *Telepato II*. Here the main effect is the drawing of an unknown design. Even if you weren't blindfolded the effect would still not be possible.

And sometimes, in this type of effect, the blindfold strengthens the routine and covers a weak point. A good example of this situation would be in a *Card Calling* effect where the spectator grabs a bunch of cards from a supposedly shuffled deck and you call off all the cards he holds. It is a powerful effect, and is usually achieved using a stacked deck and a *False Shuffle*. (I, of course, prefer my *Breakthrough Card System*.) You simply break the deck at the point where the spectator removes his batch of cards, secretly note the card above that point, and work down in your stack.

If you employ a blindfold, a number of fine points to strengthen the effect can be added. The blindfold should be in place before the cards are selected. The audience will therefore feel that you have no way of knowing what area of the deck the cards came from. They will also feel that you cannot know how many cards were chosen and they will be convinced that the cards are not marked — after all, what good would that do if you are blindfolded? (And, of course, a marked and stacked deck does offer all sorts of possibilities that you should think about!) In addition, a blindfold makes the peek easier, since the spectators think that you cannot see and will therefore be off-guard.

Even though the blindfold plays a large part in the effect noted above, the trick still looks impossible without the blindfold. It is not absolutely necessary. In this case, just the blindfold alone is sufficient; nothing more in the way of eye security is needed for the effect. A quick examination by an audience member and then on with the blindfold and the routine. There are many effects in mentalism and magic in which a blindfold can be used in this way to strengthen the effect and to tie up some loose ends.

The second scenario is where the blindfold is vital to the effect; the effect is nothing without the absence of sight. This is the case in effects such as the *Blindfold Drive*, the *Acid Test* (wherein the performer drinks the liquid in the one glass of five that does not contain acid or poison), some versions of *Russian Roulette* (Bob Cassidy's effect), the *Blindfold Card Stab* (in which the performer stabs one or more selections from a

shuffled deck spread on the table), the *Blindfold Poker Deal* (in which hands are dealt to several spectators, cards peeked at in each of the hands, and the shuffled deck once again dealt with the performer receiving all of the selected cards), and in the standard *Seeing with the Fingertips* act where the performer names or describes items held out to him while he is blindfolded.

There is an important distinction between the *Seeing with the Fingertips* act and the *X-Ray Eyes* act that you should understand. It does not seem to have been covered previously in print. In the *Seeing with the Fingertips*, the performer's sight is supposed to be cut off while he senses objects without sight, while in the *X-Ray Eyes* the performer is supposed to see through the blindfold due to paranormal vision.

If you're doing an *X-Ray Eyes* act, the blindfold can be used effectively to show that you somehow can see, even though it should be impossible that you could use your eyes. The late Kuda Bux is an ideal example: Volunteers would apply dough and yards of fabric to Kuda's face. He only seemed to be worried that they left enough space around his nostrils so that he could breathe. (He claimed, when questioned about this, that he saw through his nostrils!) With his head mummified in this way, the spectators were sure sight was impossible. Yet he immediately solved math problems on the blackboard, duplicated signatures, exhibited marksmanship and many other incredible feats — difficult even if you had sight. There was no hesitation and the immediate reaction was that somehow he could still see, even though they knew sight was impossible.

In all of these effects, the whole mystery becomes the blindfold itself and it is axiomatic that the more the mystery centers on the blindfold, the more you should pay attention to making the blindfolding process seemingly more restrictive.

In other words, the blindfold is everything. It is imperative the audience be convinced that either the performer cannot see (in the case of *Seeing with the Fingertips*), or cannot use his regular vision (in the case of the *X-Ray Eyes*). Therefore, additional methods of blindfolding are necessary.

What I will describe below is the method I currently use in my professional performances. I designed it for use with the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* and I am very proud of it: it is simple, easy, and unlike most other ideas in this line is not messy.

Johnson and Johnson make an extremely large Band-Aid® that is about five inches long by two inches wide. You can find it in most drug stores. The unique thing about this Band-Aid is that there is no sticky surface at the edge of the center pads, as shown in Figure Four. If one each of these Band-Aids is placed diagonally across the eyes, as shown in Figure Five, you can still use the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* in the way explained without hindrance to the sight.

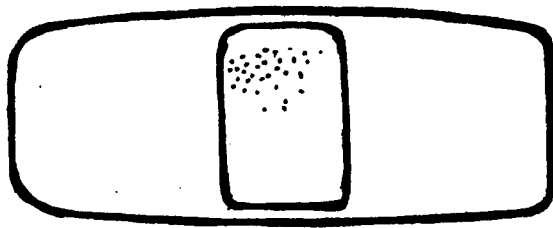


FIGURE FOUR

You may criss-cross two of these Band-Aids over each eye, as shown in Figure Six, to make it appear that sight is totally impossible. This is my preference.

There are two reasons why I am partial to the use of these Band-Aids: First, you bring them out of the standard box still secured in their original paper wrappers and have a spectator remove the wrapping. Second, there seems to be an almost universal belief that Band-Aids stick tightly and there is always pain when they are removed. When you have the volunteer remove not only the wrapper, but the plastic backing of the Band-Aid, the spectators will see how sticky it is and no one will doubt that the bandages are stuck firmly to your face. Later, when you remove them, you can squirm and go through all manner of painful contortions to make it seem even more dramatic. The effect becomes even more impossible in the aftermath as you pound home that the Band-Aids were keeping your eyes absolutely blocked shut.

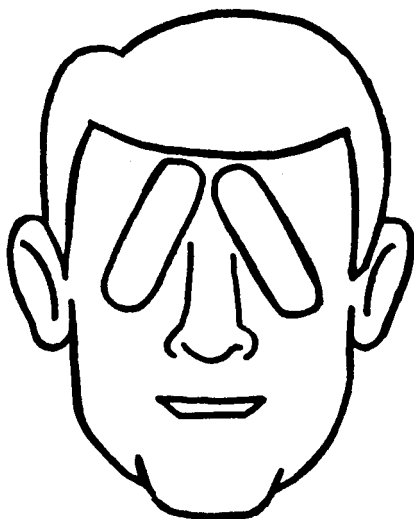


FIGURE FIVE

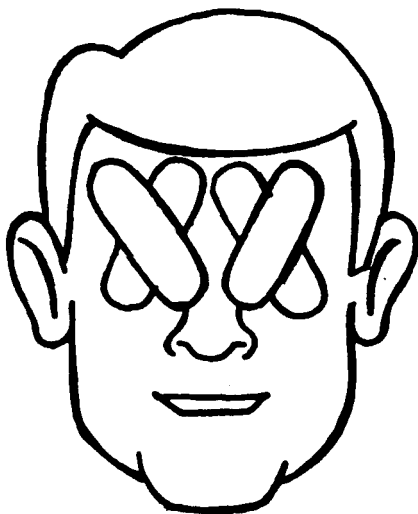


FIGURE SIX

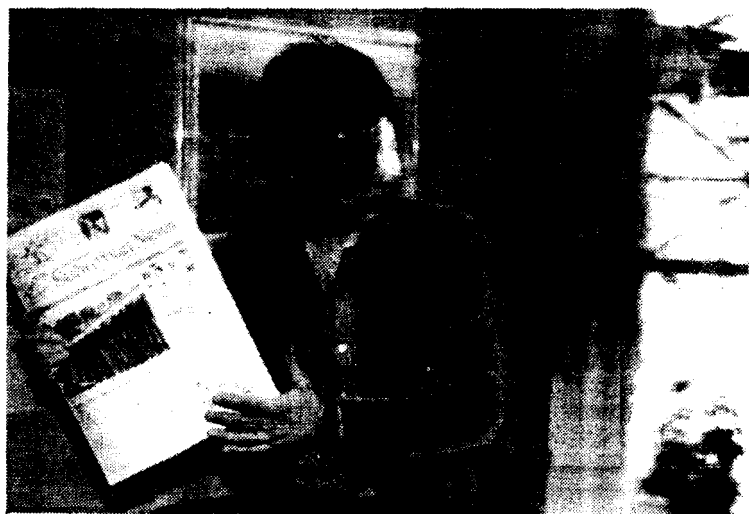
I usually place the Band-Aids over my eyes myself, and then have the spectator press them down firmly as each is attached. This insures that they are placed in precisely the right places. Actually, after there is one over each eye (if you use the criss-cross method) the spectators will have to hand you the other two. In this case you merely guide their hands in putting them on. And, remember, you only need to be able to see out of one eye.

I feel that the Band-Aid idea alone is enough to be very convincing. I don't feel you need any dough, coins, gauze pads, or the like. You'll also find this fits the bill from a practical performing standpoint: you don't have to carry around extra coins, tape, gauze pads, scissors, and the rest. In addition, you don't have to worry where you're going to stick the cut pieces of tape before you do the effect. You won't have to worry about the tape getting stuck to itself delaying the effect or even necessitating cutting a new piece — if that should happen with a Band-Aid, just toss it away and have the spectator remove another from the box. And, finally, your audience will be more convinced that a Band-Aid fresh from the wrapper is less likely to be gimmicked than a bunch of tape, coins, and the rest.

With the Band-Aids criss-crossed over each eye and the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* tightly in place and minutely inspected by assistants from the audience, there won't be one person in a thousand who will believe you can still see.

You can now proceed with any effect or routine that you have in mind. But, please remember that all of the above is not really necessary if the use of the blindfold is secondary to the effect. The secret of the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is so subtle that it is extremely convincing.

In April of 1987, I used the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* along with this method of sealing my eyes for a newspaper interview. The interview turned out to be a full newspaper page. The photos below were taken by the reporter and show me with the first set of Band-Aids over my eyes, and with the blindfold on. During the interview I got an "impression" of an object I simply passed my hands over and read a newspaper headline by simply passing my hands over the print, as shown in the photos.



The point of these photos is not self-advertising or bragging, but to show you how convincing this method of sealing the eyes is (and the shot shows only the first two Band-Aids on) and the angles from which you can still see while wearing the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*.

THE CANCELLATION PRINCIPLE

"The audience's awareness and degree of perceptiveness can definitely be controlled by the attitude of the performer and proper routining."

You may think this is a strong statement to make, but as a professional hypnotist I can assure you that this statement is true. As a magician or mentalist, you should be able to control the ability of your spectators to figure out effects and create in their minds the perfect illusion of an impossible happening.

How does this apply to blindfold work? Let me explain.

Let's assume you are blindfolded and ready to begin a series of close-up card effects. Suppose you open with a stacked deck effect where the only key to the working is that you glimpse the bottom card of the deck. You can then work in a very clean way with your eyes closed.

Perhaps you now perform an effect where the blindfold is only incidental such as Annemann's *Par-Optic Vision* — an effect where the blindfold isn't even a necessity and doesn't have to be faked, but adds greatly to the effectiveness of the routine.

Now you perform an effect where the blindfold is the **essential method**. The spectators have seen you work very cleanly before so they won't suspect the blindfold is an integral part of the method and you should be able to get away with most anything within reason. I would make this part of the routine the longest, but then would end with an effect where the blindfold is again only a minor part of the method.

Spectator's recollections are not the most accurate and soon they will be crediting you with something you didn't do, but perhaps wish you could have!

I call this the "Cancellation Principle". If you cancel out the true solution from your spectator's minds from the beginning of the routine, they will have no solution to your effects and be truly baffled.

The idea is used in a blindfold routine when you first do something you shouldn't be able to do **even if you could see**. This concept is at work when you turn your back to a spectator as you accomplish the effect. The rational thought is, "What good would a trick blindfold be when his back is turned?" Jeff Busby, Paul Fox, and Faucett Ross discuss these ideas in depth elsewhere in this book with some very helpful suggestions on routining.

The principle is also at work when you accidentally bump into a table or if you "miss" the table when putting something on it. If you convince the audience that you really cannot see, then later you can be very bold and not have to worry about the suspicion.

This may seem like common sense, but recall how many times you've seen a magician don a blindfold and immediately do something that tells the spectators he can see!

A final tip. This has been said before in many books on the use of faked blindfolds, but it's worth saying again: **Keep your eyes closed when you really don't have to see!** When you're using the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* this translates more specifically to: **Keep the blindfold down tightly on your nose when you don't have to see!**

Section II

EFFECTS WITH THE APEX STAINLESS STEEL BLINDFOLD Richard Osterlind

Many effects that can be made more effective with a blindfold come immediately to mind. You may already have your own favorite you've targeted for use with the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*. The remainder of this book covers literally dozens of suggestions, effects, and references that Jeff Busby has collected.

In my stand-up act I use a version of the *Acid Test*. Several methods — including some very ingenious ones — have been published or marketed since the days of the *Phoenix*. I use the simple method! When I do it, I use four glasses. Three are filled with milk, and one with liquid Drano® — which everyone knows is a strong corrosive. I have my eyes sealed with the criss-crossed Band-Aids and put on the blindfold. The spectator mixes the glasses around (while I secretly watch) and then I drink the glasses containing milk, leaving the one filled with Drano alone. As simple as this is, it gets a tremendous effect.

And, as I mentioned before, I also use Jeff's routine for *Telepathy*, Annemann's *Mystery of the Blackboard* and his *Par-Optic Vision*. The possibilities are endless: You could solve a Rubik's Cube, do psychometrical readings, spot a written word or a word in a book, do card reading with a stacked deck, and so on.

THE BALLOON MURDER

I'd like to briefly outline one of my favorite uses of the blindfold — one I use in my stage act.

I have two audience volunteers come on stage up to the microphone. After the usual introductions, I have one spectator inflate a large yellow balloon while the other spectator examines the blindfold and tapes the Band-Aids criss-crossed over my eyes.

After the blindfold is placed on my head, the balloon is tossed into the audience and batted around for about half a minute. I ask whoever is holding the balloon at that point to hold it above their head and not move.

I reach into my coat pocket and remove a sinister looking dagger as I step into the audience. With the knife in front of me, I slowly stalk through the audience to find the balloon "by their thought waves." It is a situation that is both funny and frightening at the same time.

When I go near the spectator with the balloon I pretend I am a little unsure and begin to go near their head with the knife. At the last second I veer off and pop the balloon — a perfect applause cue.

Now I put the knife away and have someone guide me back to the stage — I pretend to be tired from the strain of the effect, which is over. The blindfold is now removed under the bright stage lights so that the audience can see that everything is intact.

IMPOSSIBLE DICTIONARY TEST

Here is a routine for that special occasion when you want to do a blockbuster mental effect under almost test conditions. Prior to print here, I've only tipped it to two others — Jeff Busby and Bob Baker. I'm hesitant about including it here — I know it will read as "chancy" and impossible to do, however I do use it and it works like a charm. It's a combination of the use of the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* and muscle reading. If you have experience in contact mindreading, you'll find this to be an invaluable effect. As this is a book for the advanced performer, I'm assuming you do have the required experience. If not, you may want to study one of the many books on the subject such as those by Dariel Fitzkee, Eddie Dexter, or at least the section devoted to the subject in Tony Corinda's classic *THIRTEEN STEPS TO MENTALISM*. Jeff's *Recommended Reading* chapter will give you more information if you're unfamiliar with these books.

In this effect the spectator thinks of any word in the English language (foreign readers don't despair — they can think of any word in your language, too, as you'll see by reading the working of the effect). The mentalist is blindfolded and sits on a couch with the spectator sitting at his side. (If you're right handed, the spectator would sit at your right, if left handed, vice-versa.) A large dictionary (which may be borrowed) is placed on your lap and you request the spectator grab your right wrist with his left hand. The assistant is told to concentrate strongly on his or her word as you flip through the pages of the book. Eventually you stop on the page that contains the spectator's word. Next you run your extended finger up and down the page containing the spectator's word. Finally, even though you are blindfolded, you name the word aloud!

Stop for a moment and consider the effect: Everything is ungimmicked and nothing is involved but the spectator's thoughts. You have an effect that is nothing short of stunning in its magnitude. I feel it's an effect worth working on!

During the course of the effect you put your spectator into a particular mental attitude that makes the working easy and surefire. But, you must choose the spectator wisely: choose one who is willing to cooperate, and is a believer in your "wonderful powers". Here, I'm referring to a spectator who has seen you work, is impressed, and who feels there is something "special" about you.

Think for a moment about the mental process you would use to locate a word in the dictionary: First you locate the proper alphabetical section, then you look at the page headings to arrive at the general area of the word, and then you start to zero in on the word. Occasionally you'll find that you were a page off and flip to the next page impatiently. Finally, you mentally relax when you locate the exact word. This is the process you will secretly guide the spectator through as you locate his or her word.

Once you have donned the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* and have the spectator seated next to you while you hold the dictionary in your lap, impress upon him or her the importance of them wanting you to find the word. Subtly impress upon them that their mental cooperation is essential to the success of the test. You can also comment that they seem receptive and a good "transmitter".

When you begin flipping through the pages you will find the spectator's muscular reactions to be very strong as he mentally tries to guide you to the correct alphabetical section. When you are near to the word, there will be a hesitation as he looks for the word on the page. If he sees it on the page opposite to where you are searching, his impulses will increase dramatically. As the spectator's mind is so occupied on finding the word, there should be no room in his reasoning process to analyze what you are doing or to understand the situation. Once you've arrived at the correct page, he will realize that you actually are going to accomplish the impossible task you have set for yourself. Finding the specific word is now child's play.

During all of this process you should have your eyes closed and the blindfold lowered — this will definitely help you to concentrate on reading the spectator's muscular reactions. It is only when you have your finger on the correct word and the spectator's reactions tell you to go no further that you get a quick peek and immediately lower the blindfold to normal position again. Caution the spectator not to name the word and have him close the dictionary. Now, in your best dramatic manner name the word! What more could you ask for?

THE BASEBALL GAME

Here's an effect that was suggested to me by a layman who'd seen me do a *Blindfold Drive* and my stage show using the blindfold: Why not be the batter in a baseball game while blindfolded? It seems like a very dramatic premise to me with a ball flying towards you at 90 miles per hour!

The baseball season is over for this year, but next year this will be on my mind when I'm about to stage a publicity stunt!

Section III

TELEPATO II **A Design/Color Duplication Routine** **Jeff Busby**

I've long had an interest in mental design/color duplication routines. I've even had a few in print in Bascom Jones' fine publication *Magick*. The routine you are about to read is — to my mind — one of the best you can perform with the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*.

However, it is not for the dabbler in mentalism. It's for the performer who would seriously like to present a strong color and design duplication effect that will definitely fool and impress your audience.

There's a strange story behind the routine. In early 1983, Theo Timmerman of Holland sent me a beautifully printed set of design cards for a routine he'd advertised as *Telepato*. But, he neglected to send along his instructions, as he'd not translated them from Dutch into English. In the meantime, I had only the props and a mangled working description of the effect. I promptly went to work developing a method, all the while not knowing the working behind Mr. Timmerman's effect.

A few weeks later the rough translation finally arrived and I was surprised to find that I had not duplicated Mr. Timmerman's method at all — I had arrived at an even stronger method that could be worked under almost "test conditions".

I sent a copy of the routine to Mr. Timmerman and he asked if he could provide it with his props instead of his routine. In return, he sent me a few dozen sets of the props which I advertised with my routine in my *Eoptica* magazine (#4 for June 1983). I sold out what I had and ordered more. Unfortunately no more were to be had — Mr. Timmerman had died in the brief interim.

So, until now, this routine has only been in the hands of those who purchased the 24 sets of props from me some four years ago.

I keep mentioning "props" but in fact you can make everything up yourself for between ten and fifteen dollars.

Those for whom I've worked my routine agree that my method makes for a very strong stand-up mental test that is quite baffling. Richard has used it in his stage shows and tells me that it gets a great reaction for him. In fact, as he explained at the beginning of this book, it was this effect which directly led to him developing the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*.

You should have some experience in presenting mentalism and be able to handle the basic principles before you attempt this routine. If you don't, please leave this alone — otherwise you'll ruin a strong effect.

THE ORIGINAL TELEPATO EFFECT

The basic Timmerman effect somewhat parallels a color and design duplication effect that Anverdi marketed. The Andverdi effect involves a combination of

electronics and either an impromptu stooge, or three already-known designs the spectator must draw in a known order. In reality you really only divine the order of the colors. The effect sells for several hundred dollars!

The routines I'll give you here don't use electronics, and are strictly one-man effects with no stooging of any kind. The spectator who participates will be as fooled as the rest of the audience. And, as you already know, I'm giving it to you here as a bonus — it's not costing you anything!

In the original Timmerman routine, the mentalist begins by showing nine jumbo cards. Each card has four different designs printed on it, and each is in a different color — black, red, green, and blue. The spectators inspect the cards to see that the design/color combinations are not duplicated — each card is totally different and there are many different designs. You shuffle the cards.

You are blindfolded. The spectator freely selects one of the cards and then mentally settles on one of the four designs on his card. The remainder of the cards are placed aside. Blindfolded, you face the spectator and ask him to pick up one pad of paper and a set of four colored felt marking pens from the two sets that have previously been placed on the table. He may pick up either set; there is no force. The remaining set is handed to you.

The spectator stands well away from you and draws the mentally selected design in the mentally selected color on a sheet of paper from the pad. While he does this, he holds the pad so that you cannot see what he is drawing, even if you were not blindfolded. That being done, you slowly place three of your pens in your pocket and stand holding the only pen matching the color the spectator mentally selected. Then, rapidly, you flip open your pad of paper and draw an exact duplicate of the mentally chosen design. You whip off your blindfold, compare your design to the one drawn by the spectator, and take your bows.

Mr. Timmerman's original routine is a bit easier to do than mine. However, in his routine the cards cannot be mixed by the spectator, and the design cannot be chosen while your back is turned. In my routine, the spectator may freely mix the cards and makes his selection while the cards are in his hands. This always makes the effect stronger in the eyes of the spectators.

I've included the Timmerman routine in this chapter so that you can learn the basic principle before moving on to my routine — you must learn the basic system to do the double revelation at the end of my sequence.

THE PROPS

You'll need nine blank faced jumbo cards to make the card set. The standard blank Bicycle jumbos available through most magic dealers are fine. If you can't get them, thick white posterboard in a size 7 by 4½ will do quite well.

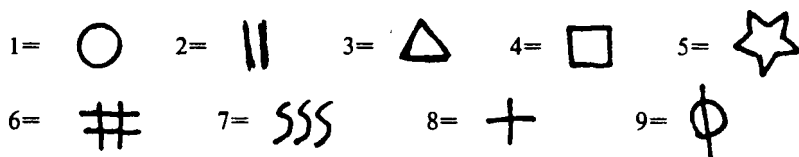
You'll also need two pads of paper, each about 6 by 9 in size and eight colored felt markers — two each in black, blue, red, and green. A word or two about the markers: they are about six to eight inches long. In addition, the barrel of the marker should match the color of the tip. Most brands come this way with a great deal of the body of the marker colored to match. If you're going to use them to make the cards, they should be of the permanent ink type. You can get the pads and markers at any stationery or art supply store.

And, you'll need a faked blindfold to work the routine. Since this book comes with Richard Osterlind's *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*, I assume that you'll use it — it's perfect for *Telepato*.

Let's look at making the cards first. Though it may seem as though a large range of

thirty-six different symbols/colors are involved, in fact there are only nine symbols, repeated in four different colors. Because of a special cyclic arrangement of the symbols and colors, there is no duplication throughout the set — whenever a symbol is repeated, it is always in a different color and position.

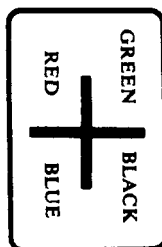
The symbols run in a 1 through 9 cycle numerically, somewhat like J.G. Thompson Jr.'s 1 through 5 numerical coding for the standard ESP deck. In the case of the *Telepato* cards, the symbols are assigned the following values:



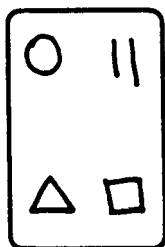
The order is actually easy to remember: The circle is 1 line; the second symbol is 2 lines; the triangle is 3 lines; the square is 4 lines; the star has 5 points; the # symbol you may just have to remember as 6 (my personal mnemonic is a bit strange: the shifted 3 on a typewriter keyboard is a #, so I just remember it's 3 X 2 = 6); the three wavy lines can be recalled as three S's for Seven; the + can be remembered as four points and four spaces for 8; and the final symbol as a circle dropped lower on the tail of the 9.

Once you've familiarized yourself with the numerical value of each symbol, you'll have to remember the color sequence of red-green-blue-black. Note that the colors progress from brighter to darker for an easily recalled sequence.

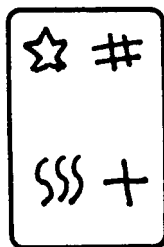
This color sequence will be consistent on each of the nine cards, starting with red in the upper left corner, green in the upper right corner, and traveling to the lower half of the card, blue at the lower left corner, and black in the lower right corner. Pictorially, then, the color sequence of the symbols is always as shown below:



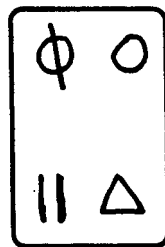
Take the nine blank faced jumbos and use the color markers to put the proper symbols on each in the order shown below, in the proper color order.



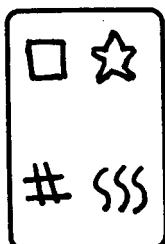
CARD #1



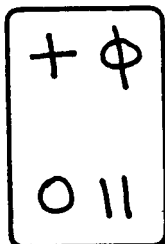
CARD #2



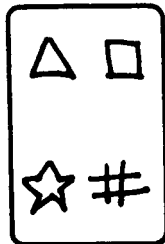
CARD #3



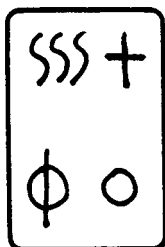
CARD #4



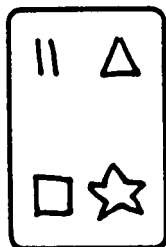
CARD #5



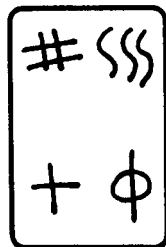
CARD #6



CARD #7



CARD #8



CARD #9

Once the cards are made, you can laminate the surface or spray a protective coating over it.

Note that the first symbol on card #1 (the circle) has a numerical value of 1 in the 1 through 9 sequence and the symbols with the values of 2, 3, and 4 follow it in order. Card #2 continues the 1 through 9 sequence starting with the star (which equals 5) and continues through the series with 6, 7, and 8.

A look at card #3, above, shows that the series continues with the symbol equaling 9 and then the numerical sequence begins the cycle again directly to the right with the circle (=1), the two straight lines (=2), and the triangle (=3). And, of course, the sequence continues on card #4 cycling all the way through the set from cards #1 through 9.

As you'll immediately grasp, with the packet in the order shown above from top to bottom, you can give the cards complete cuts and the cycle will still be intact.

SET-UP

Take the packet of cards and make sure that all of the red symbols are in the upper left corner as you arrange the cards. The red symbol will act as the "key" symbol for each of the cards.

By starting with card #1 — the card with the red circle in the upper left corner (the lowest value in the numerical cycle and the lowest color value) and counting through the cycle of 1 through 9, you can rapidly set up the packet until all nine are in order.

The black symbol on a card placed down should be immediately followed in numerical sequence by the red symbol on the next card — an easy way of checking.

Once you have arranged the cards in the proper order, it is best if you turn a few of the cards end-for-end in the packet without taking them out of sequence, so that not all

of the red corners are facing in the same direction; there should be colors intermixed on each corner of the packet. Obviously the set-up is still the same, but it does look as though the cards are more haphazardly mixed.

The fact that the cards are numbered and colored in sequence is the crux of Mr. Timmerman's method. It's system based on Ronald Haines and Allan Milan's *E.S.P. Excelled*, a routine marketed by Haines' House of Cards in the Fifties. The effect was available in both Bridge and Jumbo sized cards. Milan (also known as Allan Cracknell, formerly of Venture III in Cincinnati) told me that the Haines/Milan routine was, in turn, based on Edward Bagshaw's *Thought Ray*. Timmerman extended the number of symbols greatly and added the color idea to widen the application of the cyclic principle.

THEO TIMMERMAN ROUTINE

The routine can be presented under close-up, parlor, or stage conditions.

Ask a spectator to assist you with the experiment. Show the cards, explaining that they all have different symbols and colors. Leaf through the cards showing this is so. Next display the two sets of felt markers, two each in each of the different colors. Also introduce the two pads of paper. Place all of the materials on the table.

Take your blindfold and after having it inspected, put it on. Pick up the face down packet of cards. It is best if you close your eyes to add authenticity to this. Keep your eyes closed throughout the routine and only open them when you need to make the secret peek.

Once you are holding the packet face down, either give it a *Charlier Shuffle* which is natural with jumbo cards, or if you don't know that simple false shuffle, give the packet several straight cuts. Fan the cards and have the spectator select one. After he has drawn his card from the packet, casually cut the packet so that the card above the spectator's selection goes to the face of the packet. By casually tilting the packet face up as you give the spectator instructions to look at his card, and decide on one symbol remembering both the symbol and color, you are able to secretly glimpse the black symbol on the face card of the packet. By counting forward one more in the system, you will immediately know what the first symbol (the red one) on the spectator's card must be. This red symbol is your "key".

Once the spectator has made his selection of a symbol/color, hand him back the packet and have him shuffle it freely. By knowing the "key" symbol on his chosen card, you will be able to simply calculate any one of the three other symbols on the card by adding 1, 2, or 3 to it and recalling the proper numerical symbol and the color order. The colors, of course, always follow the same order of red, green, blue, and black.

Have the spectator place the packet aside face down. Tell him to pick up one of the four sets of markers and a pad and hand them to you. Once he has done this, have him take the remaining pad and pick up the marker that is the color of his selected symbol. As soon as he picks up the marker, you'll know what symbol of the four he's chosen by adding 1 to your key if the color is green, 2 if the color is blue, and 3 if the color is black. Of course, if the red marker is picked up the selected symbol is the "key".

Have him draw the symbol in the proper color as large and as clearly as possible to help him or her to "form the clearest mental image of the symbol." I'd suggest you turn your back and walk away from the spectator as the symbol is drawn.

As the symbol is being duplicated, you open up your pad. Ask the spectator if he is finished. Once he has affirmed that he has, slowly drop the pens that are not the correct color into your side coat pocket, one by one, retaining only the pen of the correct color. Pause for a moment, then rapidly draw the correct symbol in the correct color without

letting anyone see what you have drawn. Cap the pen and drop it in your pocket. Remove the blindfold and ask the spectator to display his symbol to the audience. Turn your pad around to show that you have duplicated the mentally selected symbol and take your applause.

TELEPATO II

In the Paul Fox/Faucett Ross section of this book, there's a letter in which Faucett says the following: "The tests you present should fool the audience even if they know you had the use of your normal vision. In other words you could do the act without a blindfold and they'd still wonder how you did it."

My handling of *Telepato* relies on the principle of pencil reading in combination with some other ideas. Pencil reading is usually very baffling on its own, but if used in combination with a blindfold, it becomes a powerful tool.

Before you quit reading this section, heed what Corinda has to say about the subject in his classic *THIRTEEN STEPS TO MENTALISM*:

"... it would be reasonable to say that the average well-read mentalist knows about pencil reading, but has never tried it. The reason why the average mentalist has never tried it is because first and foremost it sounds like hard work and that is enough to scare him, and secondly, in so much that it is known to be uncertain, the element of risk deters any who may otherwise be interested."

As noted by Corinda, many mentalists consider pencil reading to be difficult or unreliable in use. This is not so in this effect. Let me explain: When I received the cards from Mr. Timmerman, I made the serendipitous discovery that the symbols Mr. Timmerman had chosen for the *Telepato* cards were nine symbols ideally suited to making pencil reading extremely easy. They are of such a design that there is no question as to what is being drawn with just minor practice. In combination with the large size of the markers and the small size of the pads, this method is 100% practical. Following Faucett Ross's thinking, the routine would no doubt be effective even without the blindfold, but the blindfold in combination with pencil reading and the mathematical sequence within each card makes this a baffling mystery. And, these principles allow the mentalist to perform two tests, each relying on very different principles to allow no solution.

What is pencil reading? Annemann says in his *COMPLETE ONE MAN MENTAL AND PSYCHIC ROUTINE*, on pages 23 - 24 in the article called *Pencil Reading*:

"This is one of the most valuable accomplishments in the mental field... It takes practice, but is worth every minute spent... It isn't as difficult as it may seem and will be of great value in many ways."

Corinda specifically says in *CORINDA'S THIRTEEN STEPS TO MENTALISM: STEP TWO, "PENCIL, LIP, SOUND, TOUCH AND MUSCLE READING"*, pages 28 - 35:

"Pencil reading is the Art of standing some distance away from a person who is writing with a pencil and being able to discern from the visible movement of the pencil, what is being written.

"A simplified explanation of the Art is that, by keeping a careful eye on the movement of a pencil used in writing, adding to that the movement of the hand and elbow, you can very often tell what is being written."

At any rate, I hope that I've not scared you off with all of the above. Believe me, the pencil reading that you will have to do in this effect is simple and easy. Remember, there are only nine symbols involved.

The visual cues needed to recognize each of them are so different, that there is no mistaking what symbol is being drawn.

Let's take a look at the distinct visual cues that will be reproduced by the spectator in drawing each symbol.

- 1.) The circle.



One circular stroke with the felt marker. This is a continuous stroke.

- 2.) The two straight up and down lines.



This will either be two downward or two upward (through rarely the latter) strokes, spaced widely apart.

- 3.) The triangle.



This will be either an inverted "V" with a horizontal stroke to close it, or the three lines continuing around to form the triangle.

- 4.) The square.



There are two methods that the spectator will use in forming the square. The usual is to draw the upper line, then a line down at right angles to it, a line at right angles to that, and the final line to close up the box, or two lines parallel to each other and then the final two parallel lines to close up the box. See #6 for further information on this.

- 5.) The star.



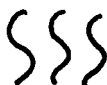
This is singularly obvious because of the number of lines involved. The spectator may, however, form the star by doing a triangle and then overlapping it with an inverted triangle to form the "Star of David". Be on the alert for this and make sure you duplicate the star in the way the spectator formed it. At the conclusion of the effect, you can point out that the spectator's star does differ from the one depicted on the card, and that you were momentarily confused by the image.

- 6.) The crosshatch.



Two sideways strokes and then two downward strokes, or vice-versa. You may feel that this is easy to confuse with the square, but it is not if you're sure to note the length of the first two lines drawn in relation to the second set of lines.

- 7.) The curved lines.



The cue is self-evident. You can't miss it.

8.) The cross.



A vertical and then a horizontal stroke, or vice-versa.

9.) The circle and stroke.



Again, pretty obvious. Watch for the circle, but make sure that you allow enough time for the vertical stroke before you assume that the spectator has just drawn a circle.

As you can see, there is almost no chance for confusion of the symbols if you simply watch the cues that I've just noted.

The pencil reading is shamefully easy if you use the large markers and small pads I've already described. To convince yourself of the pencil read, and to get in a bit of practice in recognizing the symbols, get your wife or girlfriend (or husband or boyfriend) to draw any one of the symbols with one of the felt markers on one of the pads. Stand about six to ten feet away and forget about the blindfold for now. The aim of this exercise is to build up some confidence.

By analyzing the strokes, you should easily be able to correlate the strokes to the proper design. After a few practice sessions, you'll easily know the symbol by the strokes.

While the pencil reading of the design would, in itself, not be a bad effect, when used in conjunction with a blindfold with the pens as cueing devices and then via the pencil read having the spectator clue you in as to what all four symbols on the card are without his knowledge, the routine becomes an exceedingly strong design/color duplication effect.

I've worked this as a stand-up effect under intimate conditions, though it is equally as strong for stage work.

You don't need any additional props to work this handling — just the cards, markers, pads, and the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*. The cards do not need to be set up in any particular order.

To begin, show the nine jumbo cards commenting on the profusion of designs and colors. You patter along the line that these symbol and color cards are currently being used by parapsychologists across the country to test the ability of subjects to transmit simple designs and colors to a trained receiver. Comment further that it has been found that these designs and colors allow the most rapid projection. Ask the spectator to look the cards over to make sure that the design/color combinations are not duplicated — that each card is totally different and there are many designs.

After the spectator has done this, have them check out the blindfold. Once this has been done, don the blindfold.

Ask the spectator to hand you one of the pads lying on the table and one of the sets of four markers.

Have the spectator thoroughly mix the nine jumbo cards and then select one. Ask the spectator to place the remainder of the packet onto the table and to remain holding the selected card. Tell the spectator not to expose the face of the card to any of the other spectators — that you want the symbol he will ultimately select to be his thought alone. (And, of course, you want to make sure that the spectators know that it has not been exposed to you even though you are ostensibly securely blindfolded and would not be able to see it anyway.) Tell the spectator to fix his attention on just one of the four symbols on the card that he is holding — burning the image of the symbol and color into his mind.

Once the spectator has indicated that he is thinking of a design/color, ask him to place the card into his pocket, or to place it face down on the table. Direct him to pick up one of the pads and the four markers and to stand away from you.

Have the spectator pick up his pad. Tell him to discard the markers that he will not be using either on the table or in his pocket.

Throughout most of this, you should have had your eyes closed to add authenticity to your actions. **Open them.** Direct the spectator to slowly draw the design on the pad, as large as possible, concentrating on it as he does so to firmly fix the image he has in his mind. Direct him to discard any other thoughts from his mind as he does this. So much of the pen is exposed that you should have no difficulty pencil reading the design the spectator has chosen. And, of course, you know the color of the symbol he has chosen — you can see the marker!

Once you know what the symbol and color are, close your eyes again. Appear to concentrate and then slowly drop the three unnecessary markers into your pocket one by one. Open the pad, and draw the symbol. Turn to face the audience and ask if you have received the correct image. Keep your eyes closed as you do all of this.

You should be greeted with a round of applause. However, you are not finished yet.

Ask the spectator to look again at his selected card and to think of any one of the other symbols depicted on it. As he is doing this take all four markers from your pocket.

Request that the spectator place the card away, keeping the second symbol firmly fixed in his mind. Have the spectator discard the three markers he will not be using onto the table, retaining the one marker that is the color of his second selection.

You turn your back on the spectator and walk away from him for a few steps as you again direct him to draw the second symbol/color on another sheet.

With your back turned, you immediately duplicate the second symbol/color on your pad. How? Remember, you know the color of the second symbol. The symbols are set up on the card in the order already explained — therefore if you know any one of them, you know the others — and you already discovered the first symbol through pencil reading.

Remember, the symbols are in numerical order from 1 through 9 and the colors are always in the sequence red-green-blue-black. By knowing the symbol and color of the first design you duplicated it's easy to count backwards or forwards through the system to the color the spectator has selected the second time and to thereby know the symbol.

It is important in this second phase that you do the duplication while your back is turned — this adds strength and credence to the first test — if you can do it blindfolded, you should also be able to do it with your back turned.

Once you have duplicated the symbol, show the pad to the spectators. Slowly turn around, whip off the blindfold and ask, "Did I get it right? . . . I did!"

Retrieve the props from the spectator, thank him, and go on to your next test.

Section IV

SEEING WITH THE FINGERTIPS **The Faucett Ross/Paul Fox Correspondence** **Commentary by Jeff Busby**

Two undeniably legendary figures in the area of subtle magic were Paul Fox and Faucett Ross. Over a period of three decades, these professional magicians kept up a voluminous correspondence on a wide-ranging variety of magical subjects. I consider myself fortunate to have many of these letters in my files.

Richard Osterlind's *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is so exceptional — to me the best all-around method — that I felt the relevant extracts from letters between Faucett and Paul belonged in this instructional book. In this way you will have not only a fine prop, but the most informative instructions possible. It is my feeling that this discussion of methods, between two thinking professionals, contains valuable information and new methods for the blindfold worker.

At the very least, the comments on effects by both Faucett and Paul will give you a unique insight into developing and performing more powerful and effective routines — routines which can be the highlight of your show.

Both Paul Fox and Faucett Ross had experience with the *Sightless Vision* effect. In the late Thirties, Fox used the *Blindfold Drive* combined with the *Blindfold Walk* as a publicity stunt, as shown by the photos and ads reproduced in this book. And, Faucett Ross certainly performed the effect, as evidenced by his comments in the letter to Fox of January 17th, 1939. It's not well known that Ross performed with his own spook show throughout the mid-west as "Dr. Ross"; it's quite possible that the blindfold was a part of this show also.

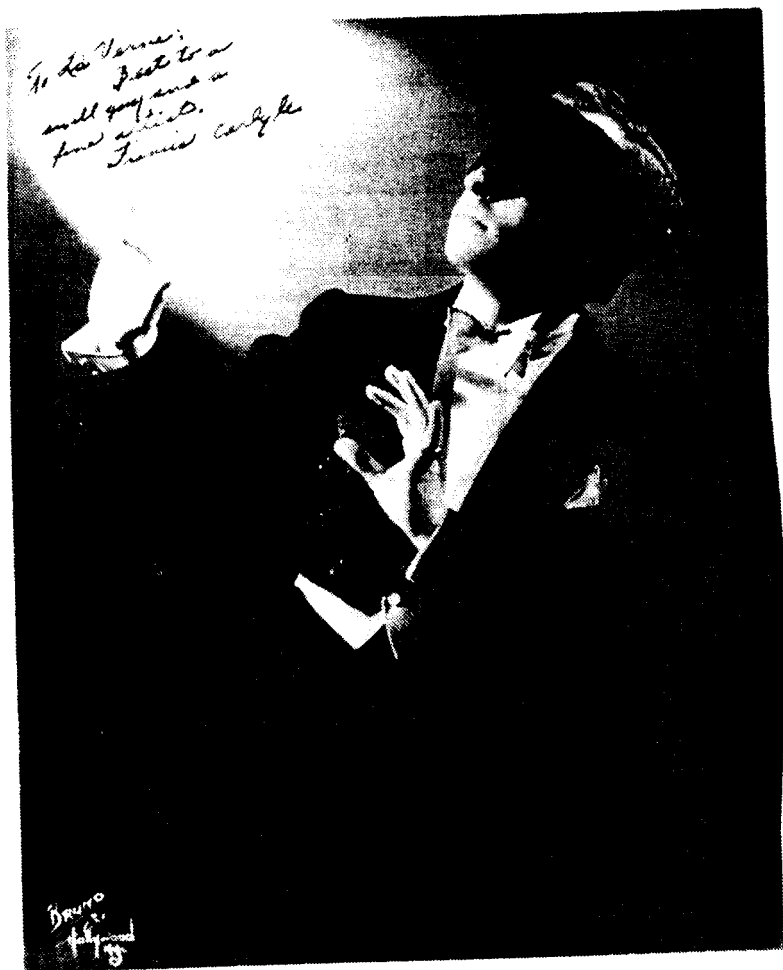
The letters on the subject of *Seeing with the Fingertips* cover only a period from November 1938 through January 1939. However, an incredible amount of information on the subject — information that will be new to most readers — passed between the two magicians. Embedded within the letters are totally new effects by Dai Vernon, Faucett Ross, an ingenious and logical piece of apparatus by Paul Fox, plus suggested routines, and the reasoning behind the act. Apply these ideas to Richard's *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* and you'll have an unbeatable combination.

My only regret in releasing this material is that Faucett Ross did not live to see it published. Faucett, a friend and mentor, died May 18th, 1987 of a heart attack while this book was still in preparation.

The series of letters begins with the following. In the interest of historical accuracy, they have been reproduced without change, exactly as written originally.

LETTER FROM FAUCETT ROSS TO PAUL FOX **November 30th, 1938**

Received letter this afternoon from Finneran [Francis Carlyle] more or less detailing his version of "Seeing with Fingertips". The data is not complete (shall write



Publicity Photo for Francis Carlyle's ("Finneran") *Seeing with the Fingertips* Act.

him again) and nothing original but shall subjoin it later in this letter, word for word, and you can use your own judgement.

Think I told you that years ago I did this thing for several months — the orthodox method with a rather strong finish. Now I'm all interested again but during the past few months have tried to analyze the thing and have a few theories to offer. So read carefully!

The weak thing about this trick as usually presented is the fact that there is a decided let-down in audience interest after the first few moments. Here's the reason. The performer is "securely" blindfolded and starts the tests. After one or two it is immediately obvious to the average spectator that the [performer] is using his normal vision to accomplish his ends. They are probably fooled as to how he is able to see but they do know he does see.

Why? Because everything he does could be accomplished if he had the use of his sight. The conclusion is that he does see by some ingenious artifice. Therefore the only

BIG TRIPLE SHOCK-SHOW!

SHOCK NO. 1

MADMAN! LOVER! KILLER!

"THE MAD DOCTOR"

BASIL RATHBONE
ELLEN DREW
JOHN HOWARD

SHOCK NO. 2

"THE MONSTER AND THE GIRL"

A Paramount Picture

PLUS—
Shock No. 3
ON THE STAGE



DR. ROSS and His

GHOST SHOW

Now Playing

RIALTO

Doors Today **12:30**

Stage Shows:
3:30—6:45—10:00

Today Till 2 **20¢**

Faucett Ross's Spook Show Advertising.

thing that puzzles them is the blindfold itself and not the tests. This was very obviously the audience's reaction when Dai and I caught Tarbell's act in Brooklyn last winter. After a few tests the interest started lagging and remarks could be heard all over the house to the effect that "it's just a trick."

Now here's my theory of how the thing should be done and tell me if I'm right or wrong. The tests you present should fool the audience even if they know you had the use of your normal vision. In other words, you could do the act without a blindfold and they'd still wonder how you did it.

Another thing. Almost all the blindfold boys depend on "breaks". The night I saw him, Tarbell got no breaks whatsoever and the presentation was plenty sad. On occasion I can see where he might get breaks that he could take advantage of with great results. Finneran also intimates that he depends on breaks to a considerable extent.

Personally, to hell with that sort of thing. I want the thing to click consistently and don't care to undergo the nervous strain and worry occasioned by waiting to take advantage of circumstances.

Anyway, this sort of thing takes lots of experience. Tarbell has been doing the trick for years and is at home with it. But how about us? We'd do it only occasionally and so would want a definite clean cut routine, easy to do and one that will go over well regardless of circumstances.

Frankly, I think it's weak to be blindfolded and then start a protracted routine of describing people, objects, etc. Also, it's a dangerous thing because people will insist that you describe items that you can't see and to refuse them weakens the whole idea. One woman at the Brooklyn show made a monkey out of Tarbell. He said he would describe the contents of her pocketbook. She said, "Go ahead," but flatly refused to open it or let him touch it. An argument ensued in which the doctor [Tarbell] came out a poor second. He also had an argument with a doctor present who insisted that Tarbell touch objects only behind his (Tarbell's) back.

I don't fancy this sort of thing and what I'm trying to get at is that I'd like to do a short snappy routine of say four or five tests carefully worked out with strong patter.

I think Dai's "Brainwave Deck" as Finneran calls it, would be one swell item. (You know, the eight or ten long cards scattered thru pack treated with Slick Ace, etc.)

Of course, there's an element of failure possible with the deck, but this could be easily avoided. For example you hand Dai's deck to one of committee on stage with instructions to examine, shuffle, cut and note card. In meanwhile another committee-man is handed a second deck, straight, except that it contains a short card corresponding to forcing cards in Dai's deck. After regular deck has been shuffled, etc. you take it, locate short card, withdraw and hold it back to audience (i.e. face down). Now ask party name of his card and, if okay, you show yours. If he misses the force, you simply replace short card and again have deck shuffled. Even a second miss would be permissible for, as Finneran says, a mistake in this type of work strengthens instead of weakens.

To make the thing logical you ask party selecting card to be allowed to touch the card with your fingertips only.

Yes sir. I think the above would be a good test. Another would be to borrow three one dollar bills (all squeezed into a ball by owner) and drop them into Al Baker's faked
...

COMMENTARY

Of particular note is the advice Faucett gives on presenting the effect, his critique of the famed Tarbell act, and the beautiful card matching sequence. Regrettably, the remainder of the letter is missing, as is the Francis Carlyle routine referred to in the introductory paragraph. However, from a later letter, it is clear that Faucett is referring to an Al Baker method called *Al Baker's Pet Hat Trick* from *AL BAKER'S BOOK* (New York, 1933, pages 4 - 5). The Baker book is difficult to locate, so perhaps a precis of the method might be in order here.

The method is typically Baker — subtle and ingenious: What looked like an ordinary hat (and Baker wore his gaffed hat as a normal one) actually had an interior shell made from a cut-down second hat. This was inserted into the normal hat with the edge of the shell fitting under the sweatband of the normal hat. One side of the shell had a cut out section which just cleared the sweatband. This was propped open with a matchstick and the hat was placed opening upwards on the table. Three folded bills were secretly placed into the hat prior to the performance. Each of these bills had a different starting digit for the serial number and the three complete serial numbers were memorized. When ready to perform, Baker had three spectators remove bills from their wallets and fold them into eighths. These were dropped into the opening of the shell, the

matchstick kicked out of position and the flap closed. An assisting spectator was asked to take the hat, mix the three visible bills, remove two and hold the third while visualizing the serial number. As the three pre-loaded bills each had a different starting digit, all Baker had to do was to "pump" for the first digit. Once he had that (and at most you could fail twice) you could then slowly and dramatically give the remainder of the number. (There are, of course, some very subtle methods of pumping for the number other than just "going for it".)

Faucett mentions "rolling" the bills, but this would cause the side of the gaff to bulge. If you need to flash the inside of the hat, folding the bills, as in the Baker original, is recommended. The Baker hat idea is a clever one and still appropriate to a *Sightless Vision* routine, as suggested by Faucett. However, if you feel a hat is an outmoded form of dress, you may, of course, use any other switching device that can be handled by the spectator to accomplish the same effect.

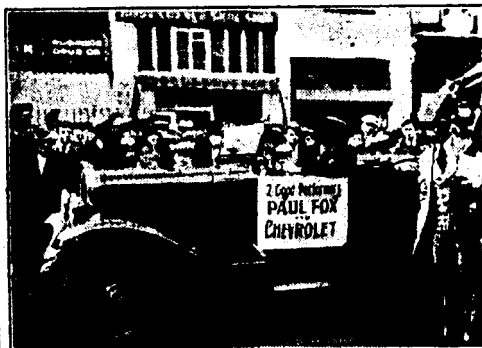
You will note the reference to Dai Vernon's "Brainwave Deck" in the above letter. But, you'll also have noted that the effect commonly known as the *Brainwave Deck* differs greatly from that described by Faucett and as named by Francis Carlyle. The effect that is now known by that name is one of any named card being reversed in a sealed deck, with the named card having a different back color. That effect based on a Judson Brown concept, was invented by Paul Fox, and was published by Ted Annemann, erroneously credited to Dai Vernon in *Jinx* Number 49, for October 1938. The method was published without the permission of either Vernon or Fox.

However, that effect and method had nothing to do with the Dai Vernon forcing deck as briefly described by Faucett, and, until now, not previously in print. The Vernon deck was constructed as follows: Eight to ten duplicate cards are used. It is best that these duplicates be an insignificant spot card, such as the Four of Clubs. Any other eight or ten cards are discarded from a genuine matching deck and this 44 or 42 card deck is trimmed or sanded shorter by the barest fraction of an inch and the corners rerounded. The duplicate cards are polished on the face with *Slick Ace* paste or fluid. They are then inserted into the deck with five or six indifferent cards between each of the duplicates. The end result is a deck which the spectator can give a cursory examination and then shuffle. You then request the spectator cut the deck. If he cuts by lifting up a portion, he will more often than not break the deck at one of the "long" cards. If he cuts by pushing the upper portion of the deck to the side with his thumb, the deck will usually break with a *Slick Ace* card on the face of the upper packet. While the force is not 100% surefire, the deck offers such freedom of action and such an apparently free choice on the part of the spectator that it is worth the chance. Faucett's suggested presentation using another deck with a *Short Card* matching the force cards in the Vernon deck is a clever idea and sure to baffle anyone. It is, as he notes, particularly effective in the context of a *Sightless Vision* act. Now having the secret, I suggest you back up and read Faucett Ross's explanation of his idea once again.

A final comment on the *Brainwave Deck*: Astute readers will no doubt be asking themselves this question: "Why, if the *Brainwave Deck* was published in October of 1938, was Faucett still referring to another deck by the same name in November of that same year?" The answer is simple: As with most magic magazines, Annemann's *Jinx* was chronically late — its publication schedule did not match the date on the masthead and the issue was actually published sometime after the "October 1938" dateline. As for the title given the published effect, it would seem that Annemann had heard the title for the effect bandied about and thought it a good one for the Fox effect he published under Vernon's name in the *Jinx*.

Thursday Evening

DROVE CAR BLINDFOLDED



Picture shows Paul Fox, magician, now giving performances at the Little theater for the American Legion, as he began his blindfolded car-driving exhibition yesterday afternoon. Fox used a new Chevrolet roadster.

An Amazing Feat

Paul Fox to Drive the New Chevrolet Six Through Down Town Streets While Completely Blindfolded.

Paul Fox, Celebrated Magician, who is appearing at the Little Theater, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, under the auspices of the American Legion, will perform the amazing feat of driving an automobile through the crowded downtown streets Wednesday afternoon at 3:45 while completely blindfolded.

Mr. Fox has chosen the New Chevrolet Six as the car he will drive.

No less amazing feat is the ability of General Motors Corporation to produce this fine New Chevrolet Six, with its many advanced achievements in engineering, at the extremely low prices now quoted on these cars. Comfort, style, performance and economy are all embodied to the fullest degree in this New Chevrolet Six, which is now on display at

Cady L. Daniels, Inc.

Chevrolet Sales and Service Exclusively
North Weber and Kiowa. Phone Main 1750

Colorado Springs Post No. 5, the American Legion
Presents

THE CELEBRATED MAGICIAN

PAUL FOX

MASTER OF MYSTERY

In Three Evenings of Entertainment
For Amusement Purposes Only!

Illusions and Dexterities, Amazing and Amusing

This is not a "medium" show only, but an entertainment of the highest class—Varied, clever, professional and lasting for two and a half hours. No dull monotonies. Music by John U. Thompson.

There will be three acts: Magic in the lighter vein; magic for young persons from 1 to 18; psychic and pseudo-psychic phenomena.

The last act will include mind-reading, glass writing, mystical mathematics, spiritistic stunts, and Mr. Fox will

CHALLENGE

Any Spiritualist to perform any experiment which Mr. Fox cannot himself perform without the assistance of spirits.

But the purpose of this production is amusement—not propaganda. Mr. Fox will display

New Illusions Never Before Shown in Colorado Springs
by Any Magician

LITTLE THEATRE FEB. 20-21 and 22
Admission \$1

All seats reserved. Best sale opens tomorrow at Allen Music Co. (formerly Knight-Campbell's), 100 N. Tejon Street. The Little Theatre's capacity is limited. Better get tickets early.

FOX, BLINDFOLDED, WILL DRIVE CAR

As a public demonstration of his skill, Mr. Fox will allow himself to be blindfolded, his face covered entirely with a four-fold blindfold made here by the Singer Sewing Machine company, and will drive a Chevrolet car in traffic, obeying all signals, avoiding all obstacles, making all turns properly, while still blindfolded. Mr. Fox will make stops at the Wigwam, Allen Music Co., Johnson-English Drug Co., and the Perkins-Shoemaker Co. Be at the corner of Pikea Peak and Tejon at 3:30 p. m., next Wednesday, to see this impossible feat.

B LINDFOLDED

Mr. Paul Fox will drive an automobile through the streets of Colorado Springs and stop at Allen's promptly at 3:40 p. m., TODAY.

Meet this man of mystery at Allen's. He has been a distinguished article in the show while blindfolded. He will be here at exactly 3:40 p. m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday. He is appearing at the Little Theatre under the auspices of the American Legion. Tickets for sale here.

ALLEN
MUSIC COMPANY

Main 555
Lillian Allen, Pres.
100 N. Tejon

First Showing of Knox Spring Hats

See Paul Fox
Master of Mystery

Select his Spring Hat at the
Perkins-Shearer Store Today
afternoon at 3:50

Paul Fox, the celebrated magician who is appearing at the Little Theatre under the Auspices of the American Legion Thursday, Friday and Saturday Nights, will drive an automobile through the streets WHILE BLINDFOLDED Wednesday afternoon. He will stop at the Perkins-Shearer Store and (while still blindfolded) select a Knox Spring Hat of Pearl grey from the large variety of styles and colors.

PERKINS SHEARER CO.
Exclusive but not Exclusive

IF

Paul Fox
"Master of Mystery"

Can Come Into Our Store
and Pick Out Unusual
Glasses, Why Can't You?

Mr. Fox selected a box of Mrs. Brown's Goggles, for which we are exceedingly grateful.

JOHNSON-ENGLISH
DRUG COMPANY
108 EAST PIKE - PEAK AVENUE
MAIN 1400

The **Bigwam**
GIFT SHOP
108 EAST PIKE - PEAK AVENUE

IF

It's the Newest Thing in
Birthday Cards
That

PAUL FOX

Will seek, while blindfolded, in our shop Wednesday, he will have no trouble at all finding it.

Be sure and see one of Mr. Fox's performances at the Little Theater this week.



Newspaper Publicity for the *Blindfold Drive* and *Blindfold Walk* for Paul Fox.

LETTER FROM PAUL FOX TO FAUCETT ROSS

Undated

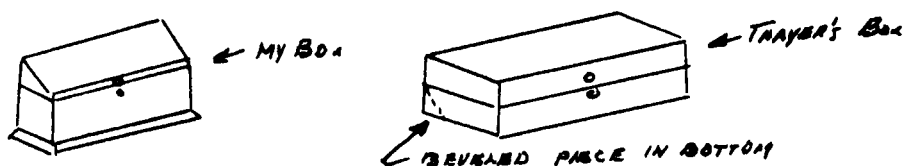
Remember the old number blocks in chest with the small magic tube for divining rotation of numerals? This of course had a compass in tube. I have one of those sets from Thayer. Allowing the numbers to be arranged, box closed and clasped and wrapped in newspaper.

You then show magic tube. This is switched for one with compass in it and held over box as you pretend to peer through paper and box and see the numbers. As Thayer makes it, this has one big drawback. You have to feel box, after it is wrapped in newspaper as the blocks being arranged and wrapped is done out of your sight.

As I have said, you have to feel to locate the clasp so you can tell the front from the back; also bottom from top, otherwise you couldn't know you were calling numbers in proper sequence. This, of course, takes a great deal away from the trick, because it would be a miracle, if the box were closed and wrapped in ordinary paper without you seeing it, and then without you touching it you named proper sequence.

My idea for doing this in connection with Seeing With the Fingertips is this:

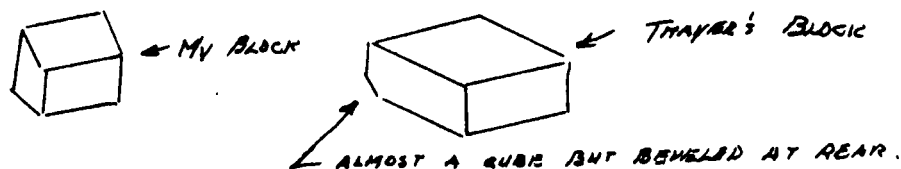
Thayer's box is perfectly rectangular in shape but I propose to make the box as shown below:



Now you can see that even though wrapped in newspaper you can't fail to get the proper "slant" literally or figuratively. When they put it on the table it must be placed bottom down due to the angle of slant of top also you can't fail to recognize the front from back through newspaper due to pitch of top.

In Thayer's box, at the bottom, there is inset a piece of wood that acts as an offset so the blocks can't be put in upside down or backwards as the lid won't close until the blocks are placed in properly.

That is all taken care of in my type design by the shape of block and box itself, for as you can see the lid on my design can't be closed until blocks are placed in right direction.



Each block has a piece of polarized steel in it. The way this steel is set (imbedded) in block — as to direction — pulls the compass needle in different direction. Hence the necessity of blocks going into box properly in relation to the imbedded metal.

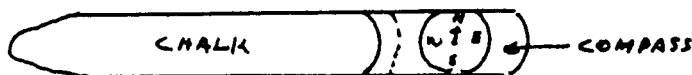
Instead of blocks being black with brass numerals, I'll have each block a different and contrasting color which, of course, will make the trick more visible — also precludes the idea of anyone thinking the solution was possibly a mathematical formula. Here is the presentation.

You have previously done the [Doc Nixon] Videtec Slate. Box and blocks introduced along with a sheet of newspaper. Show how blocks can be arranged in many possible color sequences. (16 to be exact.) Give to assistant at hand — to in turn hand to member of seated audience — along with newspaper.

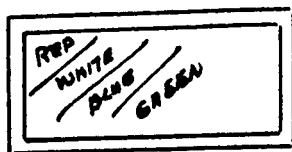
You turn your back while spectator in audience arranges blocks to suit their taste and then they wrap in newspaper and bring up and place on table.

You turn around and advance to table with slate [used in Videtec Slate] and piece of prepared chalk which you have switched for piece previously used in your vest pocket while your back is turned.

Here is what I think is a great throwoff for using compass. The stick of chalk is real, that is, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of it — the other $\frac{1}{4}$ is a piece of metal tubing which slips over end of chalk. The remainder of tubing is plugged with wood (doweling). Hole is drilled through tubing and compass is inset in the wood as shown in sketch. The metal tubing and end painted, of course, to match the chalk.



You hold the slate poised in writing position in left hand and chalk is held as though for writing — between index finger and thumb. Then in line with the idea of seeing with the fingertips the right hand hovers over box — holding piece of chalk — which of course registers color in end position. You then reach up and write the color each time in sequence, as they are in box, onto slate.



I have every confidence that with the proper build up it will prove sensational. That is why I don't want to clutter up the routine with card tricks. Simply a few tests in audience then Videtec Slate winding up with the box and blocks. There simply won't be any explanation.

COMMENTARY

The original of this letter has been lost. It was, however, included within a typescript manuscript compiled from the Paul Fox end of the Ross/Fox correspondence by Frank Csuri in 1961 called *THE MAGIC OF PAUL FOX*. The illustrations in the above section of text are those copied from Mr. Csuri's manuscript. I'm sure you'll agree that the Fox method is far more convincing than the *Box of Numbers*. Faucett's letter of January 17, 1939 makes further comments on the *Box of Colors*. In addition, an explanation of the *Videtec Slate* will follow that later letter. It should be noted that all manufacturing rights on the Paul Fox *Box of Colors* are strictly reserved. You are welcome to make one up for yourself, but you may not make the apparatus up for anything other than personal use.

LETTER FROM FAUCETT ROSS TO PAUL FOX

December 14th, 1938

Here's effect of proposed "opener" for "Seeing with Fingertips". Everything used is absolutely **unprepared**, no duplicates and "no gimmicks".

1 — 18 White poker chips.

2 — 18 Blue poker chips.

3 — 18 Red poker chips.

An unprepared satin black bag — 9 inches wide and twelve deep.

That's all.

Volunteer who blindfolds you examines all the props — chips and bag. Chips are dropped into bag a few at a time. Performer shakes bag and dipping hand into it takes out a number of them to show them thoroughly mixed.

Then asks audience to name their favorite color and after due searching takes out a handful of chips of that color. Repeats with other two colors. At finish pours out rest of chips from bag — all, of course, thoroughly mixed.

I like the simplicity of this thing both as to the method and the effect. This is much stronger than you might think in a cursory reading.

Everything examined. Bag is held in left hand with thumb on one side and fingers and palm on other. Position of left hand holding bag is very important to remember — thumb faces audience and therefore fingers are **behind** the bag and top of bag is turned slightly away from audience. Also left hand holds bag by left side and not at center.

Working: Volunteer is holding the stacks of chips. Take a few red ones from him and drop in bag — withdraw hand — showing empty. Repeat with a few blue and white.

Now take a few more red chips and when hand is inside bag drop only one or two to bottom and slip the rest between the first and second fingers of the left hand — a portion of the bag going in with them. In other words chips are held **through** bag.

Repeat with blue chips and secrete a few (about eight in each case) between second and third finger.

Finish with white, secreting between third and little finger.

Now shake bag to mix chips and right hand can bring out a bunch from bottom of bag to show thoroughly mixed.

Someone names a color and all you have to do is place empty right hand into bag, rattle chips at bottom and as your hand is leaving bag merely release those you require.

That's all but, Paul, I think this is a great little item and a natural for Seeing with Fingertips. Use good bone or composition chips. It's one of those things that couldn't be done normally even with vision, and that makes it good.

Here's the way I have entire routine doped out. Open with above then a quick trip into audience describing people and objects. Back to platform and into Dai's forcing deck. Next is the Videtec Slate a la Nixon and finish with the 3 borrowed dollar bills. This last can be made very powerful. As soon as volunteer selects one of the bills from the hat, you open and return other two. Tell him to open selected bill and allow you to touch finger to serial number.

Now pick up large slate and after due cogitation you write number on slate without showing. Now ask a volunteer to call off first figure and turning face of slate to audience you show your figures to correspond and make mark through it with chalk. Repeat with rest of figures — all done very snappy and dramatically. This could be made a sensation. In fact, the whole routine is miles ahead of Tarbell's or anyone else. As Finneran says this is a real date-getter . . .

COMMENTARY

Though not mentioned in Faucett's later letters, this "color separation" is a fine idea and has been unpublished until now. It is similar in effect to the popular *Sands of the Desert* with the advantage of no prepared props, and with everything examinable.

LETTER FROM FAUCETT ROSS TO PAUL FOX January 17th, 1939

... Re: Seeing with Fingertips. Just found out today that Rajah Raboid is featured this week at Muehlebach Grill, Kansas City's class night spot and is doing the blindfold gag exclusively. Got a rave notice in yesterday's K.C. Star so he's probably got some good presentation angles on it. Am playing a K.C. school Thurs. afternoon and shall try to catch his act that evening. Needless to say I'll take careful note of any unusual bits of business etc etc and will tip you accordingly.

When I first read your description of the Box of Numbers thing I wasn't greatly impressed but since thinking it over I've become "sold" and completely enthusiastic about the possibilities. The idea of having compass concealed in the chalk is very fine. Also the shape of the box and blocks and above all using colors instead of numbers is ingenuity characteristic of the Fox magical mentality and I mean it.

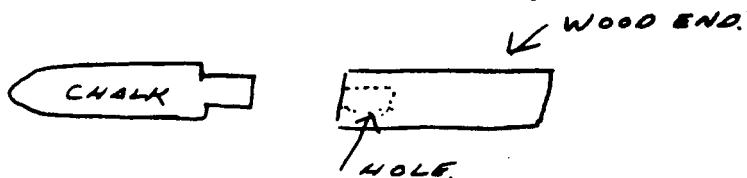
Yes, this should be an impressive and even sensational idea.

Was first prejudiced because the box of numbers is displayed and sold in all the novelty shops up and down Broadway. It's a best seller according to my friend Red [Louis] Tannen who operates a novelty emporium at 54th and Broadway and caters only to the laymen. He sells everything — was selling "Clippo" to the general public before Max Holden had stocked it — all of which goes to prove what a healthy condition our art is in, eh wot?

Nevertheless we aren't in New York so the chances are very remote that we'd run up against anyone who knew the thing. Even so, the blindfold is a throw-off. If they knew you were using a compass they'd still be fooled as to how you could see it.

... Here are my thoughts regarding the thing. In the first place, box and blocks should be large and consequently visible even in the largest auditorium. Blocks should be approximately 2½ inches square or rather wide so that length of box should be about eleven inches. Just as important — the box should be of a very light finish so that you get a strong contrast. Strike idea of a mahogany finish a la Die Box — it seems to deaden the color of the blocks or something. I think a natural wood finish — very light and French polished would be the ticket. A good red, not too dark a blue, green and orange should look well and be sufficiently visible. What you think?

... Getting back to the Box of Blocks Divination, why not have the faked end of chalk made entirely of wood with a receptacle bored out to accomodate the compass?
... End of chalk itself could be cut to fit into the wooden portion thus:



... Reverting back to "Seeing with Fingertips": I really think I have some good patter material for it. Did the thing years ago and Dai always liked my lecture if not the

method. Have copy of this and plus a few ideas the whole should be very good. So, if you like, I'll undertake to write the patter and am sure you'll be able to utilize part of it, anyway. I agree with you that the card tricks should be eliminated.

If you want me to get busy on this send me routine for Nixon's Videtec Slate. Fervently hope you have something better on it than Nixon himself. He first showed me the thing in 1926 and did it very sloppily as is his custom so I wasn't greatly impressed.

Have some good ideas in mind for the Box of Blocks based on historical fact. You may recall that a Spanish medium, Argamasilla, created a furore with a very similar effect in this country about fifteen years ago. Used a metal box, allowed spectators to place any object therein, seal box etc. and then would describe contents. The box of blocks might well be introduced as Argamasilla's "piece de resistance" — the test that puzzled The Society for Psychical Research etc. No long-winded lecture but just a few pertinent remarks to this effect: You'll attempt to duplicate the feat under even more stringent circumstances, allowing box to be wrapped in paper, etc.

COMMENTARY

The *Videtec Slate* is rarely referenced and almost totally unknown. This marketed item by Doc Nixon is, in spite of Faucett Ross's comments about Nixon's performing ability, an ingenious effect. As the instruction sheet that Nixon produced for the effect is excessively rare, I've reproduced the original instructions, exactly as written, in Nixon's rather strange style.

THE VIDETEC SLATE MYSTERY

YOU WANT SOMETHING EASY TO DO AND YOU WANT IT QUICK. Here it is — The NIXON VIDETEC SLATE MYSTERY.

NOTE: One side of the slate furnished with this sale, is rough. That is the practice side. At first you will use this side to get the idea of what it is all about. Once you get it — learn to perform the slate mystery using the smooth side of the slate. Later you will easily perform the mystery with just plain cards and a lead pencil. Then you will be doing real presentation. Practice makes perfect.

YES SIR! HERE IS SOMETHING NEW — GET THIS IDEA —Grasp the slate at the wooden rim sides. Use your forefingers and thumbs only. Hold the slate about even with your eyes. Arms outstretched. The rough side of the slate held towards the writer. Use chalk.

Request the writer to mark any single figure that comes to his mind upon the slate and that you will immediately tell him the figure he wrote. When the writer begins to chalk the slate —hold your head slightly away, sideways so as not to scan the writing. Of course you can use your own methods. I too steal the gravy in advance. See the writing many times, and the writer is not wise.

However this is not the purpose of using the VIDETEC SLATE. When the writer begins to write you should at once feel the vibration of the writing and sense just what he wrote.

TRY — HAVING SOME ONE WRITE SEVEN —THEN FOUR — THEN FIVE — NOW EIGHT. TRY SEVEN AGAIN AND THEN NINE. GET THE SLIGHT DIFFERENCE. NOW TRY READING SCRIPT WRITING AS WITH THE NAME JOE and then JOS. You should get the upstroke of the capital J. Try Jed. Now give Mary a crack. **TRY** and have someone write Henry then Harry and not tell which they will write first. The idea

is to prevent you jumping to conclusions and just because you got the H then missed the enr and again caught the y that the name was Harry. Get it —

Simple stuff and — oh boy — how they will swallow your talent? I know, for I have had them calling in the cops to throw me in a padded cell for reading things not on the slate. Well, its all in the game. You just give VIDETEC a good going over and spunk up and sell it to them and make them like it. IT IS THE GOODS.

Once you get to the smooth slate work keep on marching upwards and try and get yourself wise to writing upon plain cards. Business cards or books. The coarse grain of book covers — oh boy made to Menu, if you miss getting vibration of pencil tap dancing over the book cover — well drop Oscar Wilde a line — he will classie you.

All right magis here is where I sign off or all my rabbits may die.

Thanks and every good wish for your success. GET WISE TO A GHOST SHOW. The newest entertainment, Wonderful opportunity now to be one of the first in this line. ASK DOC NIXON. 635 North Clark St., Chicago, Ill. By Appointment Only.

In case Nixon's instructions are unclear, it should be explained that the slate surface was slightly rougher on one side than the other, and that the slate was very slightly loose in the frame to allow more vibration as the writing was done. Nixon does not mention it, but the effect can also be done behind your back. It is an ideal addition to a *Sightless Vision* routine, as suggested by Paul Fox to Faucett Ross.

Later in 1929, Doc Nixon issued his *GHOST MANUSCRIPT* — a mimeo'd manuscript chock full of spook and psychic effects. The instructions for the *Videtec Slate* were also reproduced in some copies of the manuscript. Of interest is page 5A which contains more details on the effect, but under a different title. Again, because the mentioned manuscript is excessively rare, I take the liberty of reproducing it below.

THE NIXON SECOND SIGHT SLATE

EFFECT: Presenter comes forward with ordinary unprepared slate. Spectator chalks a name upon same while the presenter blindfolded is looking directly opposite to position of slate. However, whatever is written upon slate by spectator, presenter immediately reads aloud. Numbers, sums, messages are as easily read aloud. Here is an entirely new mystery with a slate and a piece of chalk.

PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION: The presenter announces he will have several spectators write as many messages, or names or sums if desired upon a slate he will hold before them. They are to write upon the opposite side of the slate so he cannot see what is written upon that particular side of the slate. Then he will read aloud the written subject. Having approached the spectator who will take the piece of chalk, hold the slate with both hands, gripping the wooden rim only, with forefinger and thumbs. Do not touch the slate proper. Learn to hold lightly. Do not bear too much pressure upon the palms of fingers. Tightly close your eyes and turn head side ways in order to avoid scanning the writing. Do not have any distraction of any sort. Keep your mind on the writing. What ever the spectator will write you will at once sense through vibration. First try with simple single number. Then try with capital letters. Learn names and do not confuse HENRY WITH HARRY. You might get the H - - - y and guess at Harry or vice versa. Go over names. By trying out with having someone chalk write upon a sheet of fine sand paper cut to size of face surface of slate, you will greatly grasp the idea and very soon become expert along such line. I can read the slate writings as fast as the written subject. Another method is had with a special

slate which I will supply to you for general work. The fee is 50 cents to cover forwarding. While this is not entirely necessary, some applicants desire same. Remember it is the scrawl scratch that you will learn to pick up. It is the vibration you learn to read. Once you get the idea, you will advance rapidly with clean clever slate work of this particular type. Doc Nixon.

The final letter concerns the *Seeing with the Fingertips* routine of Rajah Raboid, famous for his blindfold work and notorious for his claim that he was Howard Thurston's successor. It is, as far as I know, the only complete description of the act ever to appear in print.

LETTER FROM FAUCETT ROSS TO PAUL FOX January 25th, 1939

Saw the great (?) Rajah Raboid do *Seeing with the Fingertips* and follows my reaction to it.

I enter the exclusive grill and am ushered by obsequious garcon to a very bad table as I anticipated; not being a chronic customer. Smart orchestra is playing in shaded lights. Tis almost midnight and consequently the clientele is becoming mellow, even racous (never could spell that word) in a few spots. Ceiling spot goes on after a spell and then follows several nondescript numbers. Finally —

"Introducing the feature of our program — the man who will mystify, intrigue and astound you — Rajah Raboid!"

The Rajah walks on the floor very briskly closely followed by two waiters, and carries a small telephone table covered with white cloth which he stands six feet behind the inevitable microphone. The other places a small tabouret close by — this latter holds four strips of adhesive tape, two very large pads of cotton (nearly five inches square) and a tumbler of water. Also bandage.

The Rajah deliberately places the microphone to his liking, clears his throat and then breaks into the following harangue — "My friends — for your approval I present a scientific miracle which I call (pause) seeing with the fingertips. All of you have heard or read of Jimmy Valentine — how he was able to open safe vaults by the sensitivity of his fingertips. You may think that such things exist only in story books but such is not the case. In fact what I am about to show you will eloquently prove that the fingertips by long practice can discern things just as accurately as do the human eyes. I ask you not to be prejudiced but merely watch what follows then form your own conclusions."

"I shall have my eyes securely blinded in such a manner that vision will be an utter impossibility. May I have someone from among you to assist?" (Almost before these words are out of his mouth a perfectly sober middle aged gentleman from a ringside table steps forward with great and suspicious alacrity and stands on Rajah's right. I might say, also parenthetically, that the miracle man is attired in fairly immaculate tails with a somewhat badly fitting vest. No makeup whatsoever except his mustache and chin whiskers. There's just a touch of the carnival in his actions and inflection. Also during his introduction, which I've boiled down considerably, no one has paid the slightest attention to him. It is not until the blindfold is applied that he gets attention.)

Rajah points to the little stand on which reposes the tape, cotton and — almost forgot, heavy white linen bandage — latter about five inches or more in width and at least twenty-four inches long. He continues —

"In order that my vision may be totally obscured beyond any possibility of doubt, I use a number of items familiar to all of you — anyway they should be — they're all from the Katz Drug Company just across the street. Several strips of adhesive tape and two

heavy pads of cotton. The cotton will be placed by the gentlemen here against my eyes and held in place by the strips of tape. To render the cotton even more opaque I'll soak it in this liquid. For the benefit of those who do not recognize the commodity I'll explain that it's water — plain water. I'll even drink a little of it, distasteful as it may be. (Drinks and then dips and dunks each pad therein and holds them against volunteer's eyes. Asks him if he can see etc. Now holds them against his eyes and instructs volunteer to tape then in any manner he sees fit — emphasizes this and in justice to the Rajah, must say that it's an exceedingly convincing blindfold — more so than Tarbell's if I'm any judge. Several inebriated gentlemen yell for him to apply the tapes down low and, really, his whole face is almost literally plastered when the job is finished and looks different than the orthodox but may not be so.)

At this point Rajah asks spectator to hand any article to the waiters who are to place them on the table. So, at intervals waiters are busy placing articles on table. At no time does Raboid get over five or six feet from the microphone — as usual whole place, with exception of floor, is in semi-darkness.)

"I have been fairly blindfolded. Some of you may have the idea that this cotton and tape are faked or prepared in some clever manner. Well, I shall be here tomorrow night so bring your own cotton and tape and I'll be glad to use them."

"I claim I am totally dispossessed of my normal vision but for the benefit of you skeptics (points to a noisy party of people on right) I'll go one step further." (Gropes around and finally picks up blindfold.)

"Eight thicknesses of the heaviest linen cloth. Will you examine it, place it over your own eyes and when satisfied, place it tightly as possible over my eyes."

(Assistant does so. Cloth looks wider than that used by Tarbell. While it is being tied Rajah bends his head very low. At this point his thumbs undoubtedly go under bandage and push up cotton. His back is to me, however, so can't be sure. At any rate when he faces audience the catious critics, scoffers, etc. at ringside tables are effectively silenced. Even my own waiter who is seeing the trick for the 12th time is convinced he cannot see. Of course, from now on he simply describes the objects that lay on the table. Picks them up one at a time. Holds them in left hand and his right hand nervously runs over the object — quite effective. When I caught act he described about twelve different items. Talks quite rapidly and his fingers are constantly travelling over surface of object.

In his opening lecture he emphasizes that anything may be handed him or rather waiter. "If you don't trust me with any of your belongings — write a word or a question on a scrap of paper but don't tear up the wine lists."

Waiter tells me a lot of women write questions of a personal nature and, needless to say, the Rajah is an old hand in handling this sort of thing. Some woman wrote, "Will I be married?" Raboid picks up question, feels it, and says, "Here's a question in a woman's handwriting which reads (more feeling and stalling) 'Will I be married?' Well the question, my friends is not quite accurate. What she should have asked is — 'Will I be married again!' "

This gets a great laugh and not a bad gag. Among other objects handed is a credit card, social security card and the last read was a German bill for one thousand marks; he reads number of bill very rapidly and dramatically a la Finneran.

The essential weakness of the act is mainly the matter of lighting. He works under a ceiling spot, placed well in front of him. When he reads or describes object he tilts it towards light to discern — looks a bit phoney but no one objected.

The act also lacks a climax and he walks off with just a scattering of applause. The Fox box of blocks would be very useful to him I'm sure.

Likewise, the thing has the same weakness I told you about — it builds down instead of up. The strongest point is near the start and not the finish. However, he goes

over very well and was held over for the second week. Mingles fairly with the guests and I'm sure does plenty of private readings. One woman came up to his table for autograph on menu card. He asked her for her birthday and made a brief astrological calculation with remark — "You have some interesting possibilities." Evidently "setting her up" for a reading!"



A Characteristic Pose: Faucett Lights His Pipe While Reminiscing.

Section V

RECOMMENDED READING **Jeff Busby**

As has been noted throughout this book, mentalism and magic using a faked blindfold are far more effective if you combine effects in which you must secretly see with those requiring no sight at all for performance. With the latter type of effects scattered throughout your routine, the idea that the blindfold might somehow allow sight becomes totally negated in the minds of your spectators. After all, if you're nonchalantly performing one effect with your back turned while blindfolded, no spectator will suspect that one quick peek is the method for the next effect in the routine!

The list below covers several books dealing with blindfold work. It should not be taken as a comprehensive bibliography but rather as notes on references I have found particularly helpful in blindfold work: in building a strong routine of either good psychic effects or card magic; suggesting patter and presentational themes; effects that can be performed genuinely blindfolded to be interspersed with those using secret sight; and even in suggesting what not to use or do!

While there is plenty of literature dealing with the use of the blindfold in mentalism, blindfold magic effects — particularly with cards — seem to be on the obscure side. Yet, who can deny that the *Blindfold Poker Deal* and the *Blindfold Card Stab* are not among the strongest effects in all of magic?

They're seldom seen today. A pity. And, I can't conceive of a more mind boggling routine with cards than one using a stacked deck, interspersed with a few of Howard Albright's effects, and finishing with Hans Trixer's *Card Stab* from the Corinda series. It's a routine that will fool even magicians quite badly if framed correctly. It's certainly a more appealing close-up card act for a lay audience than a confusing routine where the magician fiddles with little packets of cards to produce unremarkable results.

If you want to add drama, if you wish for your spectators to leave talking about you, then use a blindfold with your card work.

In researching the list below I've tried to cover several card routines and effects I am aware of that I think will prove sensational if you perform them using Richard's *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*.

Personally, I have an aversion to the *X-Ray Eye* or *Sightless Vision* type of act that was once so common. As Faucett Ross so aptly points out in his letters in this book, once the spectators have decided you can see, no matter how clever the blindfold, the effect is lost. To me, the blindfold is better used as an accessory — to make an impossible effect even more impossible. Richard's *Book Test* is a prime example of how the use of a faked blindfold can take an effect into the realm of the unfathomable. The use of the blindfold during a *Pseudo-Psychometry* routine, a billet reading sequence, or *Living and Dead Test* adds even more audience appeal to these standard effects.

Albright, Howard P., *SUPER-SENSITIVE FINGERTIPS*; Albany, New York: Unique Magic Studio, n.d. Albright's work has been generally overlooked by the present generation, but his writings have so much to offer in the way of twists in presentation for rather mundane effects — twists that take the effects into the realm of

miracles. This title deals with ten card effects which, although simple in working, do not require sight to perform. The first effect alone — a powerful presentation of a very simple effect popularly known as the *Ramee Samee Card Trick* (though much older and often credited to Arthur Finley) is worth your rapt attention as one to be interspersed amongst other blindfold effects where secret sight is necessary. This book, and other Albright titles are still in print and available in England and the U.S. through the Abbott company and Supreme.

Anderson, George B., *YOU, TOO, CAN READ MINDS*; Chicago, Illinois: Magic, Inc., 1968. Pages 45 - 53 explain the *Anderson Blindfold Routine*. In actuality, the article deals mainly with the *Blindfold Drive* but the concluding pages do deal with George Anderson's stage *X-Ray Eyes* act. Of particular interest are two clever bits of business easily incorporated into any act: one dealing with your picking off lint from a spectator's suit, and the other the reading of a spectator's wristwatch.

Annemann, Theodore, *PRACTICAL MENTAL EFFECTS*; New York, New York: Max Holden, 1944. A collection of effects extracted from Annemann's *Jinx* that surely must be in the library of every mentalist . . . yet so very few seem to be familiar with the contents. Aside from the wealth of general and truly practical mental material, a great many of the routines in this book can be performed blindfolded to greater effect. Don't just leaf to the chapter *Blindfold Reading* and leave it at that, but go through all of the book and consider how much other material applies. Richard Osterlind uses Annemann's classic *Mystery of the Blackboard* in his act — a perfect example of how just one glimpse can give you all the information you need for a breath-taking effect. And, if you wish to present a stunning card divination, don't neglect Annemann's *Par-Optic Vision* — an almost test conditions card reading accomplished by the simplest of means, which Richard also uses. The book is also available in paperback through Dover under the title of *PRACTICAL MENTAL MAGIC*.

Beale, Ken, *Blindfold Stud*, in *Ibidem* Number 6, July 1956, pages 21 - 22. An interesting version of the *Blindfold Poker Deal* and unique in that it is the only version of this effect involving Stud Poker.

Booth, John, *MARVELS OF MYSTERY*; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Kanter's Magic Shop, 1941. The *Feature Mysteries* chapter contains a description of Booth's professional *Seeing with the Fingertips* act under the title of *Fingers That Tell All!* (pages 78 - 82). The patter theme is quite good and parallels that mentioned by Faucett Ross in his letter to Paul Fox of January 17, 1939. *MARVELS OF MYSTERY* is still in print as a section of *THE JOHN BOOTH CLASSICS* published by Supreme.

———, *PSYCHIC PARADOXES*; Los Alamitos, California: Ridgeway Press, 1984. The chapter *When Seeing Isn't Believing* (pages 149 - 153) covers Dr. Booth's encounter with a pseudo-psychic blindfold billet reader. Good for general background. The book was reprinted in 1986 by Prometheus Books.

———, *WONDERS OF MAGIC*; Los Alamitos, California: Ridgeway Press, 1986. The chapter *Achieving Fame Though Blindfolded* (pages 104 - 112) covers in general various magicians, mentalists, and psychic fakers who've used the blindfold to garner publicity since the time of Mary McAvoy.

Bux, Kuda, *A Blindfold Method* in *MIRACLES OF MY FRIENDS*, compiled by Burton S. Sperber; Malibu, California: privately published, 1982, pages 22 - 28. While the article appears under the Bux byline, careful reading will reveal that he was actually dead when this book appeared. The method is similar to, but not that employed by Bux.

Rather, it is a rehash of a booklet issued by Carroll Priest called *THE BLINDFOLD ENIGMA*. Priest's authorship is not noted. The Priest booklet was recently reprinted by Martin Breese of London. The comments on the routine to be used with the method are of marginal usefulness.

Cassidy, Robert E., *Russian Roulette*, in *Invocation* Number 15, January 1978, pages 275 - 277. One of the most thrilling and also most dangerous routines ever conceived for the blindfold. In essence, the performer picks the only unloaded gun from amongst four. Not for the faint of heart. If you're easily distracted, do not attempt this effect . . . you're courting disaster.

Chanin, Jack, *FURTHER ADVENTURES OF THE SEVEN IN ONE*; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Jack Chanin, 1938. A thoroughly baffling card routine consisting of several unique effects that can be performed genuinely blindfolded.

Christopher, Milbourne, *Christopher on Blindfolds*, in *New Jinx*, Volume IV, Number 40, August 1965, pages 163 - 165. Describes a quartet of effects used by the author and by Kuda Bux including a design duplication effect, and a *Blindfold Walk*.

———, *Dr. Jaks' Lightning Forgery*, in *Hugard's Magic Monthly*, Volume XVIII, Number 8, March-April 1961, page 85. A lucid description of Dr. Stanley Jaks' unique routine revolving around exactly duplicating spectator's signatures while blindfolded. It was, as Christopher notes, the outstanding feature of Jaks' lecture program, *Curiosities of the Mind*. The article is definitely worth locating if you want to add something unusual to your blindfold routine.

———, *MEDIUMS, MYSTICS & THE OCCULT*; New York, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1975. Christopher's excellent chapter *Eyeless Vision* stretches from page 78 through 106 and should be required reading for anyone working with a blindfold — it is the single most extensive examination of the *Eyeless Vision* effect as perpetrated by both entertainers and fraudulent psychics. The historical material presents a ripe garden of patter possibilities just waiting to be picked by the thinking mentalist. To my mind, the work of Russian psychic Rosa Kuleshova (lauded in Shiela Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder's 1970 book *PSYCHIC DISCOVERIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN* — a pop paperback) is certainly more familiar to latter day audiences than the work of Argamasilla, though a lecture-demonstration commenting on the history of *Eyeless Vision* certainly has possibilities.

———, *MORE ONE MAN MENTAL MAGIC*; New York, New York: Louis Tannen, 1954. Contains an odd presentation of the *Living and Dead Test*,

———, *ONE MAN MENTAL MAGIC*; New York, New York: Louis Tannen, 1952. Contains two effects of interest — a presentation for a Martin Sunshine method in which you locate a make-believe "murdered", and a presentational variation of Annemann's classic *Pseudo-Psychometry*.

Clever, Eddie, *Deep of Night*, in Robert A. Nelson's *MORE MIRACLES IN MENTALISM*; Columbus, Ohio: Nelson Enterprises, 1959, pages 23 - 27. A five-phase routine of quite varied effects presented while blindfolded. Take particular note of the twist to the presentation for the *Seven Keys to Baldpate* effect. While Clever's use of the Otis Manning *O.M. Exchange Box* as a method is unnecessary due to modern mechanical means, the effect becomes something quite different when you locate "the key" from amongst many, while blindfolded. I recommend you do it blindfolded with your back turned to strengthen other effects where you do need to see.

2
Houdini, Harry, **HOUDINI EXPOSES THE TRICKS USED BY THE BOSTON MEDIUM "MARGERY" ALSO A COMPLETE EXPOSE OF ARGAMASILLA**; New York, New York: Adams Press Publishers, 1924. The important section of interest to the student of *Sightless Vision* methods is the extensive chapter on the methods used by Joaquin Maria Argamasilla to apparently see through sealed metal boxes. A more accessible source for the same technical information is Walter B. Gibson and Morris N. Young's 1953 book **HOUDINI ON MAGIC** still available in a paperback edition through Dover Publications.

Hull, Burling, **ANNEMANN'S CARD MIRACLES & MENTAL MYSTERIES**; Woodside, New York: Stage Magic, n.d. Annemann's *Five Card Stabbing Mystery* on pages 28 - 31 of this book is an exceptionally clean *Blindfold Card Stab* with several unique features: the deck is thoroughly shuffled, five cards are freely selected and the deck is shuffled again. While blindfolded you stab the cards in the order requested! By all means look this one up. The book is still in print through Micky Hades.

———, **THE LAST WORD BLINDFOLD METHODS**; Woodside, New York: Stage Magic, 1946. A mimeographed manuscript covering a dozen different faked blindfolds, all minimally practical in view of more advanced methods available today.

Hugard, Jean and Braue, Fred, **MIRACLE METHODS NUMBER TWO: MIRACLE SHUFFLES AND TRICKS**; Alameda, California: Privately published, 1942. So far as I am aware, this was the first of the methods published using the *Cull-Stock Shuffle* to perform the the *Blindfold Poker Deal*. Braue's version, *Blind Man's Poker* is to be found of pages 24 - 25. The effect is this: You are blindfolded, four hands of Poker are dealt, the spectators each peek at a card in their hand, the hands are gathered, the deck shuffled and you deal four hands once again. You show that you have dealt the peeked at cards to yourself. It is a routine which has an effect on laymen far out of proportion to the means used.

———, **THE ROYAL ROAD TO CARD MAGIC**; London and New York; Harper & Brothers, 1948. Of particular note is the *Justice Card Trick* pages 211 - 213, one of the simplest of card effects that becomes a miracle with the use of the blindfold.

Joseph, Eddie, **INTUITIONAL SIGHT**; Colon, Michigan: Abbott's, n.d. A complete book on a method for and presentation of, the *X-Ray Eyes* act. While the slow moving preparation would bog any modern act down, Joseph's thinking on the presentation makes this a worthwhile read.

Koran, Al, *Miracle Blindfold Card Act* in **ROUTINED MANIPULATIONS: PART TWO** by Lewis Ganson; London: Harry Stanley, 1951, pages 72 - 77. A fine card routine of seven effects done while genuinely blindfolded. Any one of the sequences could well fit into your routine but the main point is to note how much more effective these rather simple card tricks are when done without the apparent use of sight.

Koynini, Tony, **CARD MIRACLES**; London: George Armstrong, 1951. Pages 12 - 16 contain a six-phase card routine done while genuinely blindfolded. Once again, worth checking out for a phase that appeals to you.

Larsen, William W., Sr., **THE MENTAL MYSTERIES AND OTHER WRITINGS OF WILLIAM W. LARSEN, SR.**; Los Angeles, California: Genii Publishing Company, 1977. An extremely valuable but generally overlooked book for the mentalist. This collection of the mental manuscripts originally issued in mimeographed form by "Bill Senior" while he was owner of the Thayer Company in the Forties is

worth its weight in gold and offers much to the student of blindfold work. Of particular note are the *Pineal Eye* — a lecture on Pat Marquis, the teenage wonder who did a blindfold act; and *Dr. Q's Sight Unseen*, which also contains a wealth of patter material. But don't neglect Larsen's lecture for Annemann's *Pseudo-Psychometry*, the various psychological readings, and the section on contact and non-contact mind-reading — all material that goes hand in glove with blindfold work.

Mann, Al, *NONE SO BLIND*; Freehold, New Jersey: Al Mann Exclusives, 1982. Neither Richard nor I recommend you use the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* for the *Blindfold Drive*, which is a dangerous stunt if you do not have full vision. A *Blindfold Walk* is a different proposition — much safer and almost as effective. (For some information on Annemann performing the *Blindfold Walk*, see *New Jinx* #54 for October, 1966.) Richard does the *Blindfold Drive*, but frankly when he does so, he uses the only other blindfold he considers practical — the one described by Al Mann in this book.

It is not a new method, being similar to others in print and based on Paul Graham's *Best of All Blindfolds* in Will Goldston's *TRICKS OF THE MASTERS* (1942, pages 190-193). Variations of the same basic idea have also appeared in Grant's *SECRETS: MALINI, LEIPSIG, VERNON, JARROW, ETC.*, and un-



SATURDAY Front Decembe

Blind driver

It was a case of driving blind Friday afternoon on Main Street in Seymour as Ansonia magician Richard Osterlind, right, demonstrated for a group of town residents. Above, Seymour Police Chief Walter Trzcinski escorts the blind-folded Osterlind out to his car. Below, Osterlind drives through an obstacle course made up of other cars. The stunt was part of a promotion for the magician's Sunday show at the Strand Theater.



der Danny Tong's byline in *New Jinx* #72. The first print reference I have been able to locate is in Joseph Ovette's *PUBLICITY MIRACLES* (1928) under the title of *A Super Blindfold Drive* on pages 13 - 14. Mann's book is valuable because it covers the framing and handling of the *Blindfold Drive*.

Marlo, Edward, *LET'S SEE THE DECK*; Chicago, Illinois: Ireland Magic Co., 1942. Pages 25 - 28 of this book contains Marlo's simplified *Blindfold Poker Deal* requiring little more than the *Double Undercut* to perform it. Certainly one of the easiest versions of this effect.

———, *MARLO IN SPADES*; Chicago, Illinois: Ireland Magic Co., 1947. Another *Blindfold Poker Deal* on pages 21 - 22, but this time much more difficult than the preceding.

Meyer, Orville, *Mindreading Supreme*, in Robert A. Nelson's *MORE MIRACLES IN MENTALISM*; Columbus, Ohio: Nelson Enterprises, 1959, pages 14 - 16. The mentalist looking for something different should not neglect Mr. Meyer's lovely concept for this act which uses a blindfold in a crucial, but non-suspicious way. Essentially you perform a series of tests which duplicate contact and non-contact mindreading without the necessity of having the skill.

Minch, Stephen, *EYELESS ON GAZA*; Calgary, Canada: Micky Hades International, 1984. A fine collection of card effects done while legitimately blindfolded — sort of a Howard Albright brought up to date. Essentially a series of non-sleight effects building upon each other to form a cohesive routine, you could extract segments to make the effects where you must secretly see all the more believable.

Morris, Philip, *Tips on the Blindfold* in *SENSATIONAL MENTALISM: PART 1* by Bob Nelson; Columbus, Ohio: Nelson Enterprises, 1965, pages 60 - 61. The bulk of the article is on how to get an almost-free car by doing the *Blindfold Drive*, but there's a neat "Kiss Test" presentation included.

Nelson, R. (Robert) Alan, *HELLSTROMISM*; Columbus, Ohio: Nelson Enterprises, 1935. A description of contact and non-contact mindreading as performed by Axel Hellstrom, who caused a sensation with it in the late Twenties. A rather confused account, but valuable for the routining suggestions.

———, *BLINDFOLD BILLET READING*; Calgary, Canada: Micky Hades International, 1974. A prime example of the type of material you don't want to do — a billet reading routine geared for the spiritualist church audience.

Parrish, Robert and Weigle, Oscar, Jr., *DO THAT AGAIN!*; New York, Philadelphia, Boston: Max Holden, 1939. Weigle's *Challenge Blindfold Card Routine* (pages 43 - 47) is an impressive routine with cards performed genuinely blindfolded. Once again, you can pick and chose from the effects offered to build your own routine. The routine has been reprinted in J.G. Thompson Jr.'s *TOP SECRETS OF MAGIC*.

Price, Harry, *CONFESSIONS OF A GHOST HUNTER*; New York, New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1936. The chapter entitled *The Man With the X-Ray Eyes* (pages 312 - 321) covers Kuda Bux's blindfold work along with a description of some informal tests by Price on Max Weiss, a German who claimed X-Ray vision. Worthwhile background material. The Price book was reprinted in 1974 by Causeway Books.

Randi, James, **FLIM-FLAM!**; Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1982. Pages 279 - 284 contain Randi's expose of fifteen year old psychic Linda Anderson's attempts at proving she had dermo-optical vision.

Reilly, S.W., **HELLSTROMISM**; Columbus, Ohio: S.W. Reilly, n.d. A brief manuscript on the subject of contact mindreading containing suggestions for several tests. Many of the tests can be easily used in combination with the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold*. The Syl Reilly manuscript has been reprinted as a booklet by Magic Inc. and includes additional material including reports of performances by a Dr. Newmann (apparently not C.A. George Newmann) and George Jason.

Rightmire, Richard, **THE MASTER MENTALIST**; Deland, Florida: Burling 'Volta' Hull, n.d. A show script for Rightmire's astounding act in which he wrote forwards, backwards, upside down, and rightside up, extracted cube roots, and the like. While Rightmire did not perform blindfolded, it seems that parts of this act could easily be worked into a blindfold routine a la Dr. Jaks. The book is still in print through Micky Hades.

Romains, Jules, **EYELESS SIGHT: A STUDY OF EXTRA-RETINAL VISION AND THE PAROPTIC SENSE**; London and New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1924. The classic French book examining the phenomenon of what the author termed "Paroptic Vision" by a believer (the pseudonym of Louis Henri-Jean Farigoule, a poet and novelist, not a "doctor"). Useful for patter background. Available in a modern paperback edition through Lyle Stuart.

Rothbart, Dr. Lazlo, **DECK IN HAND**; Colon, Michigan: Abbott's Magic Novelty Co., 1940. One effect, *The Blindfold Mystery* is an unusual one: You borrow a shuffled deck and separate it into four piles while blindfolded. The spectator turns the four piles up and finds an Ace on the face of each! There are easier and more effective methods available than that proposed by Dr. Rothbart.

Smith, H. Adrian, **IT'S IN THE BAG!**; n.p., n.d. A complete routine of card effects done while genuinely blindfolded (in this case, with a paper bag!). The only gaff used is a single *Short Card* which allows you to accomplish a routine of five effects. The manuscript was reprinted in **GREATER MAGIC**.

Tarbell, Harlan, **TARBELL COURSE IN MAGIC: VOLUME 6**; New York, New York: Louis Tannen, 1954. Pages 553 - 261 comprise a chapter called *X-Ray Eyes and Blindfold Effects* which contains general information on the subject of the *X-Ray Eyes* act along with descriptions of several faked blindfolds. But, the chapter contains surprising little in the way of effects other than some brief information on the *Blindfold Drive*. Rather, the previous chapter called *Mindreading Mysteries* contains several items ideal for work with the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* including Bob Parrish's *Telepathic Drawings*, Sid Lorraine's *Dictionary Message Reading* and Tarbell's own "Wrapped Card" *Message Reading*.

Vernon, Dai, **STARS OF MAGIC: SERIES II, VERNON ON MALINI**; New York, New York: Stars of Magic, Inc., 1952. Pages 3 - 4 explain *Malini's Card Stabbing*, a dramatic location of several cards while blindfolded. Not seen at all today, this could well be the stand-out effect of any card worker's act. See also the description under the title of *Blindfold Card Stabbing* in Vernon's **MALINI AND HIS MAGIC**; the original description of Malini's performance in the Tex McGuire letter recently published as **McGUIRE ON MALINI**; and the description from which Malini may have drawn his inspiration, *Discovering a Card Shuffled into Pack, Blindfolded*:

Mdlle. Patrice's Method from **THE MODERN CONJURER** by C. Lang Neil. A simple (but as usual, wrong . . .) method attributed to Malini appeared in U.F. Grant's **SECRETS: MALINI, LEIPSIG, VERNON, JARROW, ETC.** Also, you may want to check out the late Sam Berland's *Malini Outdone*, an almost mechanical method of producing the same effect, originally a dealer's item, but reprinted in a few of his lecture note books.

Vernon, Dai and Ganson, Lewis, **DAI VERNON'S FURTHER INNER SECRETS OF CARD MAGIC**; London: Unique Magic Studio, n.d. Vernon's ultra-easy version of the *Blindfold Poker Deal* on pages 9 - 10 is the best of this genre of effects done with an unprepared shuffled deck.

Warlock, Peter, **PATTERNS FOR PSYCHICS**; Croydon, England; ARCAS, n.d. A fine article on the *Blindfold Card Stab* under the title of *A Stab in the Dark* on pages 68 - 72. The patter, in particular, is of note for it is perfect for the mentalist presenting this effect. The routine is also in a later edition of the book and reprinted in the author's magazine *Pentagram*.

Wiersbe, Warren, **MENTAL CASES WITH CARDS**; Chicago, Illinois: Ireland Magic Co., 1946. Rumor has it that the Wiersbe explanation of the *Blindfold Poker Deal* on pages 9 - 11 is the exact method used by Dr. Daley and was published without permission. The method is excellent and it works. The book is still in print through Magic Inc.

Woodfield, William, *Henry Sings'* (sic) *Blindfold Poker Deal* in *Genii*, Volume 13, Number 2, October 1948, page 48. Despite the fact that "Henry Sing" is a fiction of the Woodfield imagination (a pseudonym cloaking the identities of various well-known cardmen) this is a fine example of how a stacked deck can be used in combination with a blindfold to great effect. The most important idea in the article is not the particular stack used (which is unfortunately bollixed up) but rather the "shade" on the deck switch. A major point I'd like to make is that almost any stacked deck *Poker Deal* can be used with a blindfold to great effect. Lynn (later Lin) Searles, Stewart James, Russduck, and Val Evans have all written extensively on the subject of gambling demos. Add a blindfold and you have some very strong material.

Zingone, Luis, *The Zingone Spread* in **EXPERT CARD TECHNIQUE** by Hugard and Braue; Minneapolis, Minnesota: Carl W. Jones, 1940, pages 214 - 217. A baffling effect which takes on an almost supernatural aura when performed blindfolded. Try using Reinhard Mueller's *Three Card Catch* to produce the cards for the finish, rather than from your pocket. This almost unknown effect can also be found in Henry Hay's popular **AMATEUR MAGICIAN'S HANDBOOK**.